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"URBANISM AS A [RURAL] WAY OF LIFE:"

JOHN STEINBECK VERSUS THE SOCIOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF CHICAGO

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relations between the conception of urban culture--and by opposition of non-urban/rural culture--of the "School of Chicago" and the representation of rural culture in three novels of John Steinbeck that thematically explored "the matter of the migrants" of the second half of the 1930s. Such a comparison is based on the notion that both are expressions of social practices identified with the decline of the liberal, capitalist economy and the development of the collectivist, capitalist economy which culminated with the Great Depression. It thereby explores both the relations between the development of the theoretical and methodological model of "Urbanism," as well as the development of the literary theme(s) and form(s) of In Dubious Battle (1936), Of Mice and Men (1937) and The Grapes of Wrath (1939). The aim is thus to analyze the development of John Steinbeck's ideas about rural culture, about its maintenance and transformation, to compare and contrast them to those pertinent to the sociological concept of "Urbanism" of the School of Chicago, which formally inaugurated urban sociology in the United States with the publication, in 1938, of Louis Wirth's essay "Urbanism as Way of Life."

This dissertation argues that the rural environment created by Steinbeck present the very characteristics of urban culture as conceived by the urban sociologists. The social and psycho-social characteristics of Steinbeck's rural characters conform to those traits which were sociologically considered of an urban base. But if the social conditions are similar, the causes depicted for their formation are quite different. The theory of "Urbanism" suffered from its methodological impositions; its scientific ahistorical abstraction gave rise to many misunderstandings, such as its incapacity to apprehend the totality and complexity of the social processes of urban and rural areas alike. Steinbeck's novels, on the other hand, were based and modeled on a specific historical and geographical context of extreme significance to the nation. His novels incorporate the historical dimension of the social conflicts and of the more general changes of the period. In this sense, this dissertation proposes that both the theory of "urbanism" as well as the novels here analyzed be read as specific social practices (of science and of art) that ponder on the problematic of modernity, of the mediation between the ideals of modernism and of the processes of modernization in a society which is within a definite historical crossroad.

RESUMO

Esta dissertaçao explora as relaçoes entre a concepçao de cultura urbana - e por oposiçao, de cultura nao-urbana/rural - da "Escola de Chicago" e a representaçao da cultura rural em três obras de John Steinbeck que exploram a temática dos bóias-frias rurais na segunda metade da década de 30. Tal comparaçao se dá a partir da premissa de que ambas sao expressoes de práticas sociais identificadas com o declínio da economia liberal e o desenvolvimento da economia coletivista capitalista, que culminou com a grande depressao. Este trabalho, em consequência, analisa o desenvolvimento do modelo teórico metodológico do "Urbanismo," bem como o desenvolvimento da(s) temática(s), tese(s) e forma(s) literária(s) de In Dubious Battle (1936), Of Mice and Men (1937) e The Grapes of Wrath (1939), dentro dos contextos sociais nos quais elas surgem e que lhes dao sentido histórico. Assim, tem-se como objetivo analisar, nestas obras, o desenvolvimento das idéias de John Steinbeck acerca da cultura rural, da sua manutençao e transformaçao, comparando-as e contrastando-as àquelas pertinentes ao conceito sociológico de "Urbanismo" da Escola de Chicago, o qual inaugurou formalmente a sociologia urbana nos Estados Unidos com a publicaçao, em 1938, do artigo de Louis Wirth, "O Urbanismo como Modo de Vida."

A argumentaçao procura evidenciar que os ambientes rurais construídos por Steinbeck apresenta as mesmas características da cultura urbana tal como concebida pelos sociólogos. As características psico-sociais dos personagens rurais de Steinbeck correspondem àquelas dos que eram sociologicamente considerados de base urbana. No entanto, se as condiçoes sociais se assemelham, as causas apontadas para a sua formaçao sao distintas. Verifica-se, assim, que a teoria do "Urbanismo," padecendo de suas imposiçoes metodológicas - sua abstraçao científica a-histórica - prestou-se a equívocos diversos, tal como a incapacidade de dar conta da totalidade e complexidade dos processos sociais dos meios urbanos e rurais, enquanto as obras de Steinbeck, ao contrário, foram baseadas em e modeladas por um contexto histórico e geográfico específico extremamente significante para a naçao. As obras de Steinbeck incorporam a dimensao histórica dos conflitos e das mudanças sociais mais gerais do momento. Neste sentido, esta dissertaçao propoe que, tanto a teoria do "Urbanismo," como as obras literárias em questao, sejam lidas como práticas culturais específicas (da ciência e da arte) que se debruçam sobre a problemática da modernidade, sobre a mediaçao entre os ideais do modernismo e os processos da modernizaçao em uma sociedade que se encontra em um cruzamento histórico específico.

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Behind the fruitfulness are men of understanding and knowledge and skill, men who experiment with seed, endlessly, developing the techniques for greater crops of plants whose roots will resist the million enemies of the earth: the molds, the insects, the rusts, the blights. . . .

And there are the men of chemistry who spray the trees against pests, who sulphur the grapes, who cut out disease and rots, mildews and sicknesses. . . . men of knowledge. . . . These are great men.

And men are proud, for of their knowledge they can make the year heavy. They have transformed the world with their knowledge. . . .

Men who can graft trees and make seed fertile and big can find no way to let the hungry people eat their produce. Men who created new fruits in the world cannot create a system whereby the fruits may be eaten. And the failure hangs over the state like a great sorrow. . . .

John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath

The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it.

Karl Marx, Theses on Feuerbach

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Georg Lukacs once posed a question to his readers. He asked if they thought it possible to come to know the history of one's own country better through works of art or through works of science (297). Although he does not answer his own question, he asserts that art no doubt, reveals "worlds" to man, "worlds" that no matter how imaginary necessarily reflect the same objective reality that constitutes much of the object of scientific research itself. For Lukacs, the historically established artistic attribute of literature lies in the manner through which the reader comes to terms with this reflection. Through literature the reader immediately experiences and interacts with a (re)created reality, rather than with abstract scientific concepts. Relating such abstractions to one's life is generally a polarized act, whereas with literature, and more particularly with the novel, one has the sense of immediate participation.

The reader of a scientific essay relates to the text much in the way that a scientist relates to his object of study. As a methodological imposition, scientists necessarily move away from the totality of a phenomenon to abstract "truths", or better, scientific concepts. Once having achieved this, the scientist will then return to the phenomenon--to the totality--to test and confirm (or not) the "truthfulness" of the new abstracted concept(s).

Art, however, (re)creates what Lukacs calls a "new phenomenal unity"--a new dialectical totality--through which the scientific abstractions are immersed in a (re)created phenomenon itself (222). For him, the object of art, and so of literature, is not the concept itself but the ways through which these concepts are made concrete, how they are experienced, and how they become part of life (214). "Art imitates life," whereas science abstracts life. Because art, and particularly literature, has historically retained the ability of imitating the complexity and richness of life processes, it comes closer to the revelation of these than science does (221). But Lukacs' affirmation by no means implies that one form of relating to social, historical phenomena negates the other. As he emphasizes, not only does the literary writer make use of the scientific reflection to construct the novel, but so does the reader. Moreover, in life itself both forms of reflection intermingle with one another. Experience/practice and abstraction/theory ("self-consciousness"

and the "polarization of the consciousness") are not self-excluding concepts, but interdependent and dialectical ones (297).

Of the various areas of scientific exploration, sociology stands apart in its close connections to literature, as it shares a similar outline of interest. Both literature and sociology share a preoccupation with the relations between man and his social world. Both seek to unravel the very processes which make society possible, how man comes to adapt to it as well as how he seeks its change, how society persists as well as how it changes. However, of the various forms of literary expression, the novel is particularly significant, as its basic structure is defined by the conflict between the individual and society. And although the novel certainly has a complex and long history, as sociology, it does, however, have its origin and main impetus closely tied to the rise and development of industrial capitalist society.

Swingewood suggests that "it is on the level of values where literature is seen to reinforce and illuminate purely sociological material," for according to him, the novel is in itself but a complex articulation of values. But does "purely sociological material" not articulate values as well? Although Swingewood does not approach this question, many of his analyses of the novel forms of realism, naturalism, and modernism are often associated to different sociological theories and methods (Swingewood, 03; Swingewood and Laurenson, 11-17).

This is a very complex matter, with the polemic of its question lying in the definition of that which differentiates sociology from the novel: science. One needs merely to look up the word in a dictionary to find the basis of the polemic. In the 1968 edition of the Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, for example, science is originally defined as "knowledge, often as opposed to intuition, belief, etc." It is also "systematized knowledge, derived from observation, study and experimentation carried on to determine the nature or principle of what is being studied." The "scientific" also is defined as that which follows the principles and methods of "knowledge," or in other words that which is "systematic and exact" (1305).

But, like the concept of the novel, the concept of science is historical as well. And its definition, as Benson has noted, is bound to the Renaissance and to the post-Renaissance Western world. There, "science" emerges as a "new faith" in opposition to the "old" ("J.S.: Novelist" 104). The "old faith" is that of religion, defined by Benson as any systematic belief based on intuition, imagination, or any other form that opposes the "objective/non-valuative" apprehension of the world and of the world's processes (104, 116). Science emerges as a

search for "truth," thus in opposition to the old religious, idealist philosophies which found their explanations for the phenomena of the world in realms outside of those material/graspable ones. The social, historical practice of science and of its theories were to be defined, accepted, and legitimized as long as they could empirically prove their conformance to "reality" and as long as the definitions and explications could be discovered as effectively working, functioning, present. Thus, although it came about as a new historical belief, science posed itself not as belief but as "fact."

In 1968 a group of social scientists met in Havana, Cuba to discuss the defining neutrality/objectivity of science and its specific relevance to the areas of sociology and anthropology. And all the papers, which were elaborated to prepare for the Congress's major theme, discoursed on the very absurdity of such a definition. The question of the absolute non-incorporation and non-use of values in the works of social scientific research was defined as absurd, and as Berreman claimed, this notion--this perspective of scientific research--is in itself a value as well (392).

The scientific objective is, as the dictionary defines it, knowledge. But, we must ask, knowledge for what? However, the idea of 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge'--for the sake of the growth of the scientific canon is, despite all, still a wide spread belief. Scientists are expected to discover whatever has not yet been known. They are expected to unravel, unveil, expose all of the world's processes. They are expected to grow beyond past discoveries. They must build, as Gjessing defined, "the Ivory Tower" (397).

But as Berreman states,

> If [scientists] choose to collect [their] data and make [their] analyses without regard to their use--leaving that choice to others--[they] may believe that [they] are adhering to the most rigorous scientific canons (and hence the most highly valued canons--note the word) by not intervening in society. But to say nothing is not to be neutral. To say nothing is as much a significant act as to say something. (392)

And, citing Lynd, he adds, "the questions of human value are inescapable, and those who banish them at the front door admit them unavowedly and therefore uncritically at the back door" (392).

Undoubtedly, the matter is complex, as the proceedings of the Havana congress demonstrate (Current Anthropology 9.5 (Dec. 1968) 391-431). The question of scientific production and of its relations to values still deserves various studies. What is science after all? What is science for? What is art? Literature? What is it for? Does it not lead to the construction

of knowledge as well? If so, how does it differ from science? How does it relate to it?

The social sciences are particularly polemic, for the objects of their studies are not confinable to many of the "scientific" rigors of the natural sciences. Man and his relations to his world cannot be confined and separated in scientific laboratories. Furthermore, man articulates values of his own and strives to realize these values within his own world. Societies articulate values, and thus these values themselves must be scientifically/objectively broached. Again, another problem is that many of these matters undergo vast changes, sometimes cataclysmically, in very short periods of time. That which is grasped today is no longer grasped tomorrow. That which was not apparent yesterday, becomes visible the next day. Hence, science, and this particular science, constructs its own history, where theories which are valid one day are found to be no longer valid the next.

The area of urban sociology is one which has undergone a quite dramatic history. One particular and significant moment of this history occurred when its originating theory and methodology of the late 1930s, which had an enormous impact on the scientific and political/administrative realms of its time, came to be quite dramatically questioned in the mid-1960s and 70s. Such criticism pointed, precisely, to the problematic of the values embedded in the originating theory, values which were perceived to have been informed by a kind of rural provincialism. But this theory--the theory of "Urbanism" of the school of Chicago--had posed itself as "scientific", i.e., as "objective," "exact," "precise." It had posed itself as non-committed, neutral, and the questions it brought about were based on highly rigorous theories, and through growing empirical studies.

Notwithstanding, as the new studies accused, these methods, theories, and studies were precisely the problem with their "urban" theory. Because the urban sociologists of the school of Chicago had refused to make value judgements when required, they were implicitly choosing to leave things as they were, or according to Mill, to "celebrate the present" (qtd. in Berreman 392).

Incidentally, because the area was then new, and not much data or scientific literature was available, these sociologists, at times, filled in the gaps with literature, with fiction, with novels. They used the naturalistic works of Zola, of Dreiser, and Anderson; and from these they extracted hypothetical digressions which the students were to find possible stimulations for their empirical studies. Obviously, however, this was done with care, as novels are known to be valuative constructions (Bulmer 96-97). But had they read one novelist producing in their own

period, in fact producing his most famous and celebrated work one year after the urban sociologists published their own most famous founding and celebrated essay--"Urbanism as a way of Life" (1938)--they could perhaps have found more critical stimulations, stimulations that could have hinted at the problems that the later sociologists of the 60s and 70s pointed out.

Had they read Steinbeck's novels of the second half of the 1930s--In Dubious Battle, Of Mice and Men, and The Grapes of Wrath--they could perhaps have come to some stimulating questions in relation to the areas in which their developing definition and characterization of urban culture and of the process of urbanization later proved deficient, particularly in its relation to the opposing (and as later questioned, the "supposedly" opposing) rural areas, for these three novels of John Steinbeck all deal, in one way or another, with the farmers' and the rural migrants' quest(s) of the 1930s, as they faced one of the most far reaching and detrimental periods of social crisis in the U.S..

Indeed, Steinbeck's three imaginative explorations of the "matter of the migrants" explore the same matters which the Chicago urban sociologists then studied, as they too (re)create the very practices and orientations of the rural men--their culture(s)--as they dramatically strive to discover both meanings and values in their changing social world.

My analysis is thus one of comparison and of contrast based on the notion that both expressions are of two distinct social practices identified with the historical period of the Great Depression, with the culmination of the decline of the liberal, capitalist economy and the consequent development and rise of the new collectivist economy which becomes increasingly dependent on the support and incorporation of the working class institutions.

This dissertation is divided in two distinct phases. Chapter II will examine the making of urban sociology and the development of its major defining theories, concentrating on the propositions of the urban sociological school of Chicago and its later critical analyses and theories. This initial study will be followed by an examination of the historical process of corporate industrialization in the U.S., and more specifically in the Californian fields, and of the impact of this process on the hegemonic American cultural tradition. This phase will include sociological and historical studies that refer to this particular process.

The third chapter will focus on the literary author and his novels, depicting their possible placement within the above process(es) and view(s), passing however through the analysis of the novels critical history. The three novels will then be reread in the light of the sociological

theories and of Steinbeck's intellectual, artistic, and political views. The analysis of the three novels will concentrate on the development of the interrelations (conflicts) in the individual characters, between the characters and their social realities, and between the different opposing characters. The analysis of these interrelations thus points to the similarities and differences between Steinbeck's representation of urban culture and the school of Chicago's theory of urbanism and the school's later opponent theories and values.

In the conclusion I shall question the differences between what has been sociologically and historically encountered in the novels to what other literary critics have encountered and affirmed. These expressions will thus be viewed in terms of the values they articulate and how the author consciously related to them. These questions will be analyzed in the light of the specific historical models and social theories the novels fed on. Previously questioned hypotheses will again be brought up and the very question of urban cultural assimilation--of culturalism--will be analyzed, concentrating on both the novels' developments as well as of that of the author himself.

CHAPTER II

THE SCIENCE OF URBAN LIFE AND OF THE URBAN PROCESS: URBAN SOCIOLOGY, FROM CULTURALISM TO MATERIALISM.

2.1. Text and Context: Sociology, Modernism, Urbanism, and Culturalism

Sociology, which has its first manifestations in the 1700's but formally materializes only in the next century, appeared as an attempt to explain and to intervene in the various radically new and problematic situations which a relatively young capitalism faced (MacIver 289-303; Martins 44-45). Rates of prostitution, suicide, criminality, infanticide, alcoholism, epidemics, social revolts, etc., rose through out all areas of society, but most evidently in the urban industrialized centers--the cities (Donne 25-28; Engels 95-129; Hobsbawm 221-237; Sposito 42-60). Changes were so many and so powerful that Berman, when referring to the capitalist transition as modernization, finds in Marx's Manifesto one of the best descriptions of the modern experience--of modernity. For with and within capitalism, "all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind" (Marx 12; Berman 89).

In this context, the philosophical ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity that had so greatly consummated the bourgeoisie were then consuming this very class. Man was compelled to face the fact that social optimality no longer was guaranteed through the actions of rational, self-seeking individuals. There was no "invisible hand". Since progress and order could not be controlled by the citizens themselves, the state had necessarily to intervene, and to intervene in the name of the welfare of the people (Donne 27). A series of social reforms promoted by private and governmental administrations and sustained by empirical social studies began to take place (Donne 30-31).

The intensification of the urban process and of its sociological studies, however, was not confined to the European continent alone. The United States was already giving fine demonstrations of its industrial force and of its coming future. It was the country which most expanded during the 19th century, and from the Civil War (1861 - 1865) on, no doubts could be

set upon its economic triumph (Hobsbawm 198-199).

Hancock traces the origins of urban reform in the U.S.A. back to the first half of the 19th century (599). But it is only after the Civil War that we encounter the first significant examples of urban studies, and Chicago stands as one of its major landmarks. In 1895, the University of Chicago is created and together with it its Department of Sociology. Albion Small, who founded the department and provided an initial theoretical framework for urban sociological research, was highly sympathetic to Georg Simmel's psycho-sociological works, a sympathy that will strongly influence urban sociology in the 1920's and 30's (Becker 56; Bulmer 16, 33-38; Coulon 8; White and White 234).

In addition, Chicago itself stimulated a characteristic selection of subject. During this period, Chicago was booming with European immigration and rural migrations. It simply doubled in ten years from 1880 to 90, and in the beginning of the 1900's, it housed more foreign-born and their immediate offspring than the opposite (Bulmer 12-13; Hofstadter 175). Based on these facts, Hofstadter asserted:

> The whole cast of American thinking in this period was deeply affected by the experience of the rural mind confronted with the phenomena of urban life, its crowding, poverty, crime, corruption, impersonality, and ethnic chaos. To the rural migrant, . . ., the city seemed not merely a social form or way of life but a strange threat to civilization itself. (The Age 175)

The German psycho-sociologist, Georg Simmel, like many Americans, conceived the city as a threatening historical locus. However, for Simmel, the city also housed great potentials for individual independence and development as never found before (53). The dilemma, for Simmel, lied in the growth of the urban area, of its population, and of its internal cosmopolitan variation which immediately affected the external and internal lives of the urban inhabitants.

According to Simmel's psycho-sociological theory, the enormous variety and rapidity of the city's defying contradictory processes impose and demand reactions of equal status and grade, which at their highest can bring the individual to the verge of insanity. Thus the intensification of mental stimuli leads towards the development of a necessary protective attitude, the blaze' attitude. This attitude reestablishes and sustains psycho-social wholeness through the single minded objective question of "how much?". All commodities, which now include human beings, are no longer evaluated in accordance to their use--"subjective"--value but to their exchange--"objective"--value.

The historical irony lay in the fact that if the city of the 18th century appeared as the locus of the consummation of the liberal revolutionary ideals--"Stadt Luft Macht Frei" (city air makes man free)--in the 19th century, with the economic division of labor and with the cultural romantic expressions, a new ideal appeared (qtd. in Park, "The City" 22). As Simmel put it, "individuals liberated from historical bonds now wished to distinguish themselves from one another" (59-60). The revolutionary movements that characterized the 18th century sought and fought for the liberation from feudal heritage, from the religiously inherited and rigid social roles. As believed, such a liberation would immediately force man to face his true natural being, his true individuality. Once having undergone this ritual passage--having encountered that which is common as well as different to all men--the individual would be able to establish more fraternal relations with his own kind. Thus liberty, equality, and fraternity became the revolutionary claims of modernism; individualism, its main motto; nakedness, its most powerful allegorical symbol (Berman 106-110).

For Berman, modernism, as the various cultural productions that came along with modernization--essentially capitalist development--has constantly borne on the abstract, liberal ideals, for the fundamental pursuance of self-development is constantly crippled and castrated by the impositions of collective development. According to Berman, "modernism [is] any attempt by modern men and women to become subjects as well as objects of modernization, to get a grip on the modern world and make themselves at home in it" (5). To be modern is to strive for both self and social development, "for personal freedom and public happiness" (9).

Simmel, in 1902, affirmed that the urban collectivity, the very stage in which the most significant modern dramas were performed, failed to carry out its originally proposed theme, and the irony of fate, as in all classic tragedies, lay in the hero's hands. Like Durkheim, Simmel was preoccupied with the development of social anomie, the de-regulation of society, the dissolution of social rules and solidarity. However, for Simmel, the strongest manifestation of this urban drama was the continuous unfulfillment of true liberty, the uncertainty "that we follow[ed] the laws of our own nature" (56). However ironic it may have seemed, modern man had created the exact opposite of his original desire.

In Simmel's major urban construction one can already depict the general, abstractive, dichotomous analysis that will be further developed by the Chicago sociologists. All cities are placed within a particular evolutionary scheme, withholding two ideal and culturally defined opposing poles: rural vs. urban. Although Simmel envisioned this process as a potentially

optimistic one, he was stuck in a dilemma which, for Berman, is the modern dilemma itself: the dilemma between modernism and modernization. Simmel is stuck within modernity, within the historical experience,

> of agitation and turbulence; psychic dizziness and drunkenness, expansion of experiential possibilities and destruction of moral boundaries and personal bonds, self-enlargement and self-derangement, phantoms in the street and in the soul . . . (18)

Simmel was haunted by the phantoms of the rural past. He was stuck between the potential urban realization of the individual and the rural holistic, subjective relations among all individuals. Modernization had imposed a historical opposition. Modernism searched for coexistence.

Building on top of Simmel's approach, two other sociologists of the American academy would give greater development to the construction of modern urban theory. They are the fathers of the Chicago school of urban sociology: Robert Ezra Park and his disciple, Louis Wirth.

Robert Ezra Park has constantly been celebrated as the father of this school, for it is this journalist, philosopher, and sociologist who gives the fundamental theoretical and methodological impulse towards social investigations within North American cities (Bulmer 75-100, 109-128; Coulon 19; Grafmeyer 6; White and White 156-167).

The journalistic documentary approach, pragmatism, and empiricism make up a significant part of what is then to be denominated urban sociology. Pragmatism, as an empirical and instrumental method and theory of truth, gave logical sustenance to the adoption of the human ecological theory and of the then new "life study method," which included case studies through direct observation quite similar to journalistic recordings.

Park defined Human Ecology as a discipline which dealt with the identification of the forces that tended towards the development of a typical social organization in a certain area of occupation. The human ecologist had to identify these forces and to describe the typical social institutions and organizations developed by their co-operation ("The City" 14). The empirical identification of such forces could be compared to the pragmatic search for the "sensible core of reality" which, in its evolutionary ("dramatic") conception, would include both sensational and conceptual factors, both physical (subsocial) and social factors, or as in Park's own terms, both factors of community and of society (James 214-217). Moreover, the use of independent and various case studies through direct observation would not merely contribute towards the

pragmatic--plural--account of society but "should," as Park professed, "reaffirm or redefine, qualify or extend, the hypothesis upon which the original enquiry was based" (James 279; Park, "Socio., Com. & Soc." 198).

In the community, "the nexus which unites individuals . . . is some kind of symbiosis or some form of division of labor" ("Symbio. & Social." 259). For the human ecologists, the community constituted the basic unit which accounted for the geographical and functional distribution of the individuals. Society dealt with that which is unique to human behavior: the construction and development of a social--cultural--heritage "based on communication, consensus, and custom" (259).

Underlying the theory of human ecology was Darwin's concept of the natural selection process based on the inexorable forces of competition, segregation, and accommodation (Darwin 46-49, 82). According to the Chicago members, in animal and plant associations these forces gave basis to the formation of the communities, whereas in human associations these natural areas were, due to their peculiar nature, cultural areas as well ("Socio., Com. & Soc." 201). Not only is economic equilibrium, political order, and communal organization established, a cultural heritage is formed and passed on. Through the process of socialization, the human individual assimilates a cultural heritage only to emancipate and to personate himself in the end ("Symbio. & Social." 262).

Accordingly, community studies offered far more readily available (identifiable and reliable) data than studies of societies. Human community studies would also have the advantage of necessarily withholding the larger social--cultural--phenomena. They would thus more readily lead to the discovery of the ultimate subsocial forces that operated within and influenced the development of society.

The city was conceived as the basic community environment of modern society, for the city was an ecologically evolved and live organism, an organism that brought together and interlinked the most diverse areas, peoples, and activities into one universe. This modern organism was thus conceived as a typical one, constituted by and constituting typical laws (Park, "The City" 13-15; Wirth "Urbanism" 143-145).

These sociologists were fascinated by the modern city, yet troubled by its peculiar social pathologies:

> The city, . . . , is in a very real sense a laboratory for the investigation of collective

> behavior. . . . Cities, and particularly the great cities, are in unstable equilibrium. . . . and in consequence the community is in a chronic condition of crisis. ("The City" 31)

The agitation of the cities and the continuous, never ending growth of their populations could have more intimate relations than that which first met these sociologists eyes. As James had professed, the relation among two factors was a question which demanded an empirical decision (78). The human ecologists had already claimed that,

> most if not all cultural changes in society will be correlated with changes in its territorial organization, and every change in the territorial and occupational distribution of the population will effect changes in the existing cultures. (Park, "Succession" 231)

The problem was then to discover, through objective and empirical studies, to what extent the variable of growth affected the urban culture, and how exactly it affected this culture (i.e., what are the characteristics of this culture and how do they affect the development of society as a whole?).

In 1916, Park recognized that our then knowledge of the city's life and ways owed a lot to the fictional literature of the time. However, if scientific knowledge truly aimed at the unravelling of the universal consistencies, then human ecology, as a science, would necessarily have to follow a more neutral, empirical, and exact path ("The City" 15).

It was only in 1938, however, with a professor of German origin of the Chicago Sociological Department, Louis Wirth, that a specific urban field within sociology was finally formally established. Its major landmark is Wirth's essay, defining the new object of study in its very title: "Urbanism as a Way of Life."

For Wirth, the various social problems within society were basically due to the expansion of an urban culture--to urbanization--to the expansion of "urbanism". He inferred, "rural life will bear the imprint of urbanism in the measure that through contact and communication it comes under the influence of cities" (148). As the cities developed a culture of their own, they disseminated it to other areas through the development of the means of transportation and communication and through the influence of either urban individuals or institutions (146). For him, the characteristics that ecologically defined the city--its community factors--and most influenced the creation of its social factors--its "way of life"--were, as Oliven stresses, size, density, permanence, and heterogeneity (21).

Wirth cites Aristotle, Darwin, and Durkheim as to support the major underlying human

ecological law that a large number of inhabitants within a limited area immediately leads to the specialization and to the fragmentation of the social relations of production (151-154). Fragmentation leads to individual variation, and for Wirth, the city dweller has thus to deal with a larger and less defined group of people. These facts lead to further consequences which the sociologists believed to be typical to the urban man: secondary, superficial, instrumental relations predominate over primary, intimate ones. The typical urban character is a lonely and an anonymous one.

The urban individual's loneliness cannot even be abated by the institution of the family, for Wirth believed urbanism to be also characterized by the dissolution of the family ties (160-162). Since the family no longer withholds social motivations and compensations for its reproduction, immigration attends to the growing labor demands.

Once having to deal with a larger, more heterogeneous group of individuals, the urban citizen gradually develops a more "relative" attitude towards social differences and to life itself. Such relativity is at its extreme expressed in the "blaze'" attitude, through which a more rational, objective, and secular view of life evolves (155). Since the typical urban individual has no affection for his fellowmen, he develops highly competitive, exploitative attitudes.

On the other hand, the predatory actions of the city's individuals call for the creation of more sophisticated, less direct forms of control and of individual subjective sublimation and of "more complicated, fragile and volatile form[s] of mutual interrelations" (162).

According to Wirth, the more the city's characteristics are accentuated, the more the community factors are hindered. For the Chicago sociologists, the more the city's attributes are accentuated and disseminated, the more "solidity [and solidarity] melt[ ] into air". As Wirth concludes:

> the larger the number of persons in a state of interaction with another, the lower is the level of communication and the greater is the tendency for the communication to proceed on an elementary level, i.e., on the basis of those things which are assumed to be common or to be of interest to all. (163)

In modern urban society, these "things" of supposed common interest have basically limited themselves to and evolved around "the pecuniary nexus" (157). And money matters give foundation to rational relations, not intimate relations, "founded in . . . individuality" (Simmel 49). As Simmel, Wirth is preoccupied with the hindrance of "true individual liberty," with the hindrance of that which is <u>natural</u> to man. The city (and all areas under its influence) has conclusively

become a dysfunctional organic unit, for the elementary social processes of communication and competition, which personal and social development depend on, have been tainted by the overgrowth of the objective culture. The urban collectivities have concentrated, expanded, and greatly developed the very opposite of individual realization: instability and insecurity. It was with this same understanding that Park had claimed:

> The social problem is fundamentally a city problem. It is the problem of achieving in the freedom of the city a social order and a social control equivalent to that which grew up naturally in the family, the clan, and the tribe. ("The City as a Soc. Lab." 74)

This teleological vision of the modern urban process led to the understanding of ruralism as an opposing and dying way of life. Ruralism had thus the rendition of the family, the clan, and the tribe. As two opposing "ideal types of communities", the industrial-urban and the rural-folk embedded totally different forms of individual and social life (Wirth, "Urbanism" 145).

One can easily equate the dichotomic, evolutionary, and teleological pair, rural/urban, to other previously explored concepts of the like: gemeinscaft - gesellschaft (as in Tonnies), static - dynamic (as in Durkheim), traditional - rational (as in Weber), etc. (Castells, The Urban 75-76; Hauser 503; Oliven 24). Notwithstanding, it was only during the human ecological school's period that an overall theoretical outline of cultural transformation was set forth.

Although both rural and urban sociologists contributed to the making of an evolutionary ideal scheme of development, it was Robert Redfield--a former student and then professor of the Chicago University as well as son-in-law of Park--that was to become known as the father of the continuum (Becker 57; Bulmer 126-127; Castells, The Urban 78; Donne 20; Oliven 24-25). According to Redfield, the continuum withheld two teleologically opposed ideal types which withheld the underlying knowledge of tribal and peasant group features as well as of the modern city ("The Folk Society" 181).

In 1930, Redfield published his construction of folk life based on his studies in the Mexican village of Tepoztlan (Oliven 24). There, and in comparison to previous anthropological studies, he extracted the ideal characteristics which supposedly would take into account all "tribal and peasant groups". These folk communities were, for Redfield,

> small, isolated, nonliterate, and homogeneous, with a strong sense of group solidarity. . . . Behavior is traditional, spontaneous, uncritical, and personal; there is no legislation or habit of experiment and refection for intellectual ends. Kinship, its relationships and institutions are the type categories of experience and the familial group is the unit of action. The sacred prevails over the secular; the

economy is one of status rather than of the market. ("The Folk Society" 180)

The opposite formation--the ideal urban type community--was the definite outcome and end of an acculturation process (i.e., a process of significant change of the cultural pattern of one or more cultural groups when in contact). The more the community cut loose from its isolation and homogeneity (thus grew in number and/or in number of contacts), the more it would be brought into the urban stage. This process was basically a three folded one, for the more urbanized a community, the more disorganized its culture (less homogeneous), the more secularized (less sacred), and the more individualistic (less solidary as a group) it became.

As Berman noted, and as the urban sociologists undoubtedly expressed, "the great gulf between . . . [the modernist] hopes and their realization . . . [is that] it can be a creative adventure for a modern man to build a palace, and yet a nightmare to have to live in it" (07).

2.2. Contrast: Historical Dialectical Materialism

The questioning of what has been denominated the culturalist tradition within urban sociology came some decades later in the 60's and 70's, and its greatest challenge came from the revival of the diametrically opposed approach of dialectical and historical materialism, most significantly in Europe and in the ecologically conceived underdeveloped rural/folk societies of the "Third World". As Castell's states, the tradition of objectivity and mechanical precision of the empiricist method is both a quantitative and qualitative Anglo-Saxon production, having its greatest manifestation and power in the U.S. (Problemas 58; MacIver 305). The historical, dialectical approach--an European creation--had and has had little acceptance in the American sociological tradition (Castells, The Urban 468-471; Dunleavy).

Notwithstanding, the anti-colonial liberation movements of the African continent of strong native cultural explosion of the 1960s and 70s shook the theoretical foundations of the teleological conception of cultural assimilation and brought the question of class structure/struggle back to the sociological agenda (Gonzalez 101-115). Furthermore, in the U.S., the model of American urban development, carried out since the Second World War, of "metropolitanization, suburbanization, and social-political fragmentation" broke into a massive crisis (Castells, The Urban 382-427). The very model the school of Chicago's urban sociologists

had helped devise was being questioned. As Berman emphasized, the 1970's marked the closing of the capitalist revival that had begun after the Second World War (330). Again the crisis was international. And as the same author has argued, in the 1970s, "modernism was under intense pressure to discover new sources of life through imaginative encounters with the past" (332). New problems demanded new approaches. Even the American academy came to participate in this particular "imaginative encounter[] with the past". Marxism and the Metropolis was the result of a conference on urban political economy in 1975, and as most papers there demonstrate, the influence of Manuel Castells' sociological studies, mostly developed in France, made its impact on these American urban theorists (Tabb and Sawers). The School of Chicago's propositions and methodology, that had already been unveiled by the social processes of the time, were theoretically unmasked and opposed by the growing interest in the works of Karl Marx of the second half of the 19th century.

When writing on "the method of political economy" in 1859, Marx had already criticized the approach that begins with the study of the population. He wrote:

> Population is an abstraction if, for instance, one disregards the classes of which it is composed. These classes in turn remain empty if one does not know the factors on which they depend, ... If one were to take population as the point of departure, . . .; from imaginary concrete terms one would move to more and more tenuous abstractions until one reached the most simple definition. (A Contribution 205)

The Chicago sociologists reached the simple definition of the city: a universal spatial unity defined in terms of its permanent, heterogenous population density. Population density (the city) is conceived as the natural generator of technology, of values, and thus of society. The latter concept is presented as a classless unit or, as Castells well defined, "one naturally and necessarily divided into classes, which amounts to the same thing" (The Urban 73). According to Marx, the problem of such an approach was that "the concrete subject [of society] remains outside the intellect and independent of it." This produces a "purely speculative, purely theoretical attitude" (A Contribution 207). The historical dimension is absent.

In The German Ideology, Marx and Engels exposed the different aspects of their approach: the dialectical, historical, materialist interpretation of life. History depended on the exposition of "the real process of production". The labor-process, as man's mediating activity with nature--which includes his own self--and the form through which this process is carried out, constitute the real material basis of history. Their conception, quite differently,

> show[ed] that history does not end by being resolved into "self-consciousness," as "spirit of the spirit," [--we could yet add; into "urbanism"--] but that at every stage of history there is found a material result: a sum of productive forces, a historically created relations of individuals to nature and to one another, which is handed down to each generation from its predecessor; . . . , which, on the one hand, is indeed modified by the new generation, but also on the other prescribes for it its conditions of life and gives it a definite development, a special character. It shows that circumstances make men just as much men make circumstances. (59)

The dialectical approach implied centering the material, historical analysis on the emergence of contradictions within the process of production, within the labor-process. As Marx affirmed in "The Preface to the Second [English] Edition" of The Capital, "dialectic" supposes the fluid movement of social change, "it includes in its comprehension and affirmative recognition of the existing state of things, at the same time also, the recognition of the negation of that state, . . . "(26).

Consequently, for Marx, the history of mankind is, nonetheless, the history of class struggle. Tribal communistic societies, the social foundations of history, constitute "the pre-history of society" (The Ethnological Notebooks; Manifesto 46 n.13). The different epochs of history are characterized by different modes of production and different class structures.

For Marx, a vague, abstract, and ahistorical notion of the city (and of its underlying natural division of labor) could only lead to the universalization of "bourgeois phenomena" (A Contribution 211). The city is a dependent variable (Castells, Problemas 32-33; Oliven 14-18). As Marx put it himself:

> The foundation of every division of labour that is well developed, and brought about by the exchange of commodities, is the separation between town and country. It may be said, that the whole economical history of society is summed up in the movement of this antithesis. (The Capital 387; emphasis added)

For Marx, urbanization is a historical process, and the city is the concrete form made and transformed by this process. In the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (EPM), Marx affirmed that the city historically appeared as the negation of the country. Its appearance was determined by the possibility of the creation of different classes through technological innovations and the production of the agricultural excess (Marx 80; Sposito 14).

As Williams emphasizes, the Marxist outlook demands--when using the term of determination--the full understanding of the concept in English. The materialist basis of Marxism stresses its "root sense of . . .'setting bounds' or setting limits'," the externally given relations to

the individuals and groups (Marxism 84). Nevertheless, historical materialism has necessarily to take into consideration the other--complimentary--sense of "the exertion of pressures. As it happens this is also a sense of 'determine' in English; to determine or be determined to do something is an act of will and purpose" (87). Determination thus expands on the exertion of the will on the externally, also determined--now in its full sense--relations.

Certainly, for Marx, "number and density" constitute determining factors "for the division of labor in society;"

> Nevertheless, . . . density is more or less relative. A relatively thinly populated country, with well-developed means of communication, has a denser population than a more numerously populated country, with badly-developed means of communication; and in this sense the Northern States of the American Union, for instance, are more thickly populated than India. (The Capital 387)

Marx's dialectical interpretation of the formation of the cities and of the division of labor is thus radically different from that of the Human Ecologist's. The ecological differentiation between "town and country" is conceived as a historical differentiation dependent on the development of a peculiar mode of production. Although density is an important factor, it is not the sole nor is it a necessarily a priori determining factor. As Cobos well defined, the human ecologists use spatial--physical--metaphors to designate processes that, within a Marxist perspective, are by nature social. Although these processes do have physical-spatial expressions, these are not the determining factors. They are also, and more so, determined (24).

It was thus more than a century after Marx, and after Marx, that Castells pointed to the ideological, mythical effects of the theory of the Chicago sociologists. As for the former, Castells (re)emphasized that which Dewey had affirmed in 1960: "[Wirth] defined life in urban America of 1938 and not "urbanism as a way of life" generally" (Dewey 63). However, Castells went further, stating that the Chicago sociologists universalized, not merely the American way of life but "bourgeois phenomena" as a whole, particularly North American "bourgeois phenomena" of their own time. As he noted, with the use of Wirth's construction, all countries would eventually be evaluated in accordance and in comparison to the typical, ideal model of the natural outcome of development of mankind: to the ideal model of the U.S. (Castells 83; Oliven 30-38).

Consequently, as Castells avowed, it was a socially efficient theory. And its efficiency lied in its integrative force, for although urban problems were emphasized, they were presented as problems of a more progressive, potential kind, passive of being attenuated and controlled (85).

Furthermore, despite the emphasis on the problem of the alienation of man, as expressed in the blase' attitude, the theory of "urbanism" alienated man as well. When examining a given "anomic" culture from the standpoint of its demographical, spatial characteristics as to find a few decisive determinations between these and the social structure as a whole, one winds up portraying a world of objects, where human labor if not absent, certainly plays a minor, secondary role. As Cobos later reinterated, such a reading produces an ideological effect quite similar to that which Marx denominated the "fetishism of commodities"--the "estrangement"/alienation of labor, of nature, and of man (Cobos 23; EPM 67-83). Praxis, as human purpose and activity, aimed at both the transformation and creation of the social world and of man himself, is practically absent (The Capital 198).

"'Urban culture', as it is presented [by the school of Chicago], is neither a concept nor a theory, it is strictly speaking, a myth, since it recounts, ideologically, the history of the human species" (Castells, The Urban 83). Through their evolutionary vision of cultural development, the original actions of man are presented as instrumental, direct responses to the natural/physical environment. The social realm is presented as a secondary phenomenon and as a response to the natural catalysts involving human life. These instrumental and utilitarian views are hierarchically combined, and in their combination, they construct what Matta has qualified as "our scientific mythology of the origin of man" (40-44). The Chicago sociologists thus not merely construct a myth, but reconstruct the dogma of creation, the Biblical myth of man.

In the Bible, God initially creates the physical realms of nature. Secondly, he creates the animal world, man, and finally woman. Society is merely created as a form of punishment, when God withdraws from the garden of Eden, leaving man to follow his own destiny. Each moment is presented as a definite evolutionary stage, and in the Bible (as in the Chicago theory), the individual is prior to the social order. Needless to say, it is man's individuality--his self--which is the source of all human problems, and individual redemption is, from the fall on, tied to the question of individual/social control.

In the Bible, when man disobeyed the laws of God, he was forgiven but left alone and banished from the divine order. In the sociological theory, man is found to have disobeyed the laws of nature. And as in the Bible, his redemption, if possible, must also be accompanied by a necessary resignation. Oliven, also relying on the Biblical associations, affirmed that value judgements underlie the evolutionary theory, for if man cannot return to his 'mythical' rural past,

he must learn to bear up even if an unconscious desire of a rural resurgence is constantly present (22-23).

According to the theory of urbanism, the major modern problem(s) did not lie in the technical-economic form of man's relation to nature and to other men but in the way he had spatially and numerically organized these natural/"symbiotic" relations and in the power and influence that these 'urban' concentrations gained and exercised throughout society.

But as Marx had stressed, man intervenes in nature with the use of his instruments of labour. Nature (and here, number/density) itself is a instrument, which man "annexes to his bodily organs, adding stature to himself in spite of the Bible (The Capital 199; emphasis added). Within a materialist, historical, and dialectic perspective, number, density, and the division of labour are all historically, socially relative terms and factors. Marx affirmed:

> One thing, . . ., is clear - nature does not produce on the one side owners of money or commodities, and on the other men possessing nothing but their own labour-power. This relation has no natural basis, neither is its social basis one that is common to all historical periods. It is clearly the result of a past historical development, the product of many economical evolutions, of the extinction of a whole series of older forms of social production. (188)

Marx delineated the historical "transformation of feudal . . . to capitalist exploitation", and as he noted, "wherever it appear[ed], the abolition of serfdom ha[d] been long effected, and the highest development of the middle ages, the existence of sovereign towns, ha[d] been long on the wane" (787). For Marx, if capitalism thrived within the cities handed down from earlier periods, it, at the same time, radically changed their form and organization. As Max Weber later exposed, Marx, within his own time, is clearly stating that if the city is to be conceived as an independent/sovereign variable, it can only be so in a certain historical context, a context which, with the appearance of the new social relations of capitalist exploitation and with the creation of the modern State, ceased to exist (Marx and Engels, The German Ideology 68-81; Weber). The bourgeoisie not only grew within the cities but radically changed their nature as well. The cities of the capitalist world are radically different from those of other past modes of production, one difference being within its total immersion in a larger social form of organization. It in itself does not represent a specific form of social organization but simply an objectification of a larger one.

If the history of mankind is the history of the opposition between classes, it too is the history of the opposition between town and country (The German Ideology 69). As the former did not begin with capitalism, neither did the latter. Nevertheless, with the new mode, both

histories were "developed to an extraordinary and transforming degree" (Williams, The Country 304). As capitalist accumulation carried on and conquered new markets, new technologies, and new forms of production--in short, "revolutioni[zed] the instruments of production, . . . the relations of production and with them the whole relations of society [and of the world]"--the solid opposition too "melt[ed] into air" (Marx and Engels, Manifesto 12).

Modernization gave way to an uneven, combined ever-developing totality, where all the socially constituent elements (including the spatial elements) are subordinated, articulated, developed, or yet, decomposed within the process of capitalist accumulation (Cobos 19). Marx clearly pointed to the connecting, contradictory logic between the different phases of accumulation and the different spatial areas (e.g. Marx and Engels, Manifesto 13). The development of industrial capitalism--the beginning phase in which Marx developed his theories--brought an end to the logic of the city as an end in itself.

In the country, if the peasantry (a surviving feudal class) was initially subordinated and articulated to the whole of capitalist production, with the industrial epoch, "the entire home market" was conquered (The Capital 821). The moment the industrial mode paves its way to the agricultural areas, the city as an autonomous, distinctive social system virtually disappears (Castells, The Urban 14):

> In the sphere of agriculture, modern industry has a more revolutionary effect than elsewhere, . . . it annihilates the peasant, . . . , and replaces him by the wage-laborer. Thus the desire for social changes [for modernism], and the class antagonisms are brought to the same level in the country as in the towns. . . . Capitalist production completely tears asunder the old bond of union which held together agriculture and manufacture in their infancy. But at the same time it creates the material conditions for a higher synthesis in the future, . . . (The Capital 554)

Marx and Engels had previously noted that "modern bourgeois society . . . is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells" (Manifesto 14). But if Marx believed that the sorcerer's error and human(e) renovation--negation of the negation--lay in the creation of his own apprentice and in the apprentice's potential growing skill towards the destruction of the "nether world . . . called up by his [master's] spells," the Chicago sociologists concentrated on the "nether world" itself and on the possibilities of its resinated reformation. As Berman pointed out, "this problem is especially acute for a modernism that forecloses or is hostile to change - or rather, a modernism that seeks one great change, and then no more" (7).

2.3. Contexts and Contrasts: Agrarianism and Agriculture

Castells, following Marx's path, affirmed that "all intellectual work is highly dependent, whether one wishes or not, on the social context in which it is produced" (The Urban vii). The school of Chicago's propositions are closely tied to the decline of the liberal, free-market economy and to the development of the advanced corporate, collectivist economy and its ideologies. Liberalism based its discourse on the rights of the common man, of the creative man at once unified in his private impulses and his public actions (e.g., Park, "The Mind" 93). Notwithstanding, extreme urbanization had crushed the possibilities of creativity, of true individuality. Man had become isolated from others and from his own self.

The school of Chicago espoused a liberal critique of industrial capitalism, when capitalism had for long ceased to be liberal. However, as Thurman Arnold emphasized, if governmental participation within the capitalist markets and its matters was the "national [liberal] devil;" with the 30's social breakdown, it soon became evident that governmental mediation and intervention would have to be tolerated to rescue both American capitalism and liberalism as well (qtd. in Gurko 66). In this context, government action could be viewed necessary for rescuing "the community [from its] chronic condition of crisis" (Park, "The City" 31). And for the Chicago urban sociologists, it certainly was.

Both Donne and Stott refer to the rise of regional and specific social sciences as a direct consequence of the New Deal policies and, more directly, of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the 30s. The lack of regional public records called for the making of governmental organizations in collaboration with academic studies of the sort (Donne 34, 174; Stott 71, 110-111; Wirth, "Human Ecology" 175-176). According to Donne, these studies eventually set forth a major framework for the development and organization of regions in accordance to the interests of the New Deal, i.e., in accordance to the ideals that had shaped much of what has been denominated the hegemonic American "exceptionalist" character, which was "both source and sustenance of American liberalism" (Donne 34; Howe 18). After all, as Wyatt defined, "America ha[d] been set apart from the beginning by its freedom to test itself against the unmediated" (Wyatt, The Fall 206). But with the 1930s utter social breakdown, this agrarian based exceptionalist character came under accentuated stress as the colliding social forces in

the U.S. came to resemble much of what Americans had set themselves apart from the beginning.

The Yankee-Protestant tradition was forged on top of the experience of the initial settlers with the natural--rural--landscape they encountered and against the industrial--urban--landscape they had fled from (Hofstadter 24-28; Wyatt, The Fall 206). The meanings and values of the American colonizers--of the small, independent, self-sufficient Yeomen farmers--as they were actually thought and felt--their primary "structures of feeling"--was thus forged in the midst of this experience (Williams, Marxism 132). The Yankees had fled from an urban world, and from their own growing native urban centers, they came to seek further independence.

As Johnstone asserted, the urban-rural antagonism gained force with the Colonial experience, as the underlying conflict was that of the "European merchants and the aristocrats [against] the American rural settlers whom [the Colonial cities' populations] exploited" (119). Hence, by the turn of the 18th to the 19th century, agrarianism became such a popular creed that a national myth was forged embodying, according to Hofstadter, the values and meanings of the American Revolution, "the victory of a band of embattled farmers over an [urban/industrial] empire" (28). As Hofstadter contended, from these battles, the concept of American democracy and the ideal of the Yeoman farmer became an indissoluble compound (27-28).

But the ideal man of the Yankee-Protestant tradition was not at all reluctant to take part of cash-crop production, and his praised self-sufficiency had been more due to a limit of available markets, technology, and/or capital for the necessary investments of expansion (23). Moreover, the cultural/religious "European" background of these farmers had contributed more to the development of commercial production than otherwise, for "the prevailing Calvinistic atmosphere of rural life implied that virtue was rewarded . . . with success and material goods" (40).

"To be a self-made man was [the] ideal [of the American farmer]," and the natural, social conditions made available to him determined the kind of agriculture he carried out (44). As such, the more farming was capitalized, the more the urban populations grew. As Marx defined, capitalist accumulation is based on the growing concentration of the means of production in a few hands. The characteristic of rural accumulation, where land is the major means of production, obviously tends to a larger expulsion of its population to other areas (The Capital 821).

Although, the U.S. was to be no exception, in its peculiar social setting, the agrarian

creed's subjective dimensions grew as its objective basis diminished. And the sentimental notions linked to the rural and to the West gained further force as their objective differences to the urbanized East diminished. In this context, the agrarian cultural myth gained force and posed itself as a residual oppositional mode to what the rural-fled migrants experienced as they faced evermore highly industrialized structures. And as Americans moved on to conquer and settle more remote Western areas, the cultural tradition moved on.

California occupied a unique position within the making of the myth as it geographically and temporally stood as a last mythical resort (Martin 05). California was besieged in 1846 and overthrown in 1850. And as Americans settled the new land, "California as last chance merged with California as Eden. It proves a garden but briefly held" (Wyatt, The Fall xvi).

Although, as Hofstadter argues, the "American rural society [particularly of the 19th century] was not a yeoman or a villager, but a harassed little country businessman who worked very hard, moved all too often, gambled with his land, and made his way alone," in California the rural society had its major representation in the image of a big country businessman who had others work very hard for him, and who merely moved the extension of his land monopoly, gambled with the market, and made his way through "theft, fraud, violence and exploitation [of many]" (Hofstadter 46; McWilliams, Factories 7). While most farmers were suspicious of scientific/technological innovations, Californians were most willing to appropriate whatever could be of their advantage (Hofstadter 113-114; Johnstone 143-145; McWilliams, Factories 61-65, Starr, Inventing 137).

As the American agrarian settler entered California, he brought with him a quite characteristic dual cultural identity: his yeoman inheritance and his businesslike inclination. But the sociocultural conditions there encountered and, more particularly, the Spanish-Mexican land system brought about a synthesis and preponderance of those whose own selected inventory favored the farmer's "hard side"--of "agricultural improvement, business methods and pressure politics"--far earlier than to the rest of the nation's farm regions (Hofstadter 47; McWilliams, Factories 12-13; Starr, Inventing 15-30). Although Marx had no experience of the large scale agro-industries of the century to come, he certainly depicted their emergent character within his own time. The North American and, more particularly, the Californian fields were, for Marx, the most promising areas of agro-industrial development (The Capital 555; McWilliams, Factories 56).

Starr had written, "California was never Americanized" (Inventing 12). And, in one sense,

it certainly was not, for as Daniel asserted, "the large-scale agriculture of California did not represent a departure from the dominant family-farming tradition in America for the simple reason that California was never part of that tradition" (18). But Daniel himself avowed, "California with nearly a century of [Spanish-Mexican] development entered into the Union . . . to be Americanized rather than civilized" (18). California was Americanized, but Americanized in a sense that the U.S. was only to awake to in the 1930s.

The social forces which had provided the dynamics of political-economic centralization in California and which had so greatly clashed and collided in its fields, then became visible to the entire nation. It was as if, all of sudden, the U.S. awoke to the fact that it too had been "Californianized" or was in the process of becoming so. In 1930 the historical experience of this last frontier merged with the country's new beginnings.

The centralization of agricultural capital and the trend towards the creation of vast agro-business corporations had increased throughout the whole nation. From 1910 to 1934, large-scale farms of 1000 acres or more increased 62% in number (Majka and Majka 104). And as the economic collapse hit the nation, those large-scale growers and corporations, that had credit and capital connections, were in a far better position to survive and open to thrive. Although California alone concentrated 50% of the nations large-scale farms dedicated to "poultry, truck crops, and fruit production," in 1930 other areas such as those of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, New Jersey, Florida, and Texas all employed migratory labor for their agricultural harvests as well (104-105). And as the decade advanced, new areas and new numbers were to be added.

For half a century the U.S. had been undergoing a constant movement towards capital concentration, urbanization, and industrialization (Ashton 55; Gordon 30-39; Hancock 597; Rourke 426). What changed this historical pattern in the 30s was the slowing down and in some ways the reversal of this ongoing process (98). The movement out of the city, which started at the turn of the century, gained a new impetus. With the growth of labor surplus and of labor discontent, anti-labor repression and pro-labor reforms grew throughout the nation. In the first half of the 30s, subsistence homesteading in farmland bordering cities were part of the reforms which characterized the transition from the industrial to the corporate city, from liberal to corporate production (Gordon 40-47; Majka and Majka 98).

But if many moved out of the cities, many moved out of their rural lands as well. The

Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimated that from 1930 to 40 over 2 million farm businesses failed, as by 1933 farm products had radically declined in market value (Majka and Majka 98). By the year of 1930, almost half of all farm land within the country was operated by tenants, and as the decade advanced, these numbers declined as those of agricultural wage workers increased (99). The second half of the decade (35-37) brought about the peak of farming evictions from the Dust Bowl regions.

If the forces of political economic centralization had for long been active within the nation's central agricultural fields, in 1934 nature gave them a boost. The drought and dust storms of 1934 to 38 merely contributed towards the culmination of the already ongoing processes (Leighton 12-15; Majka and Majka 98-101). As 500,000 South Central American farmers were evicted from their lands, in a period in which cities were unable to provide for their own millions of unemployed workers, these had nowhere to go but to California alone. Of the 500,000 or more evicted farmers of the "South Central states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, and Missouri . . . over 300,000 of them came to California" (Majka and Majka 106; Peeler 4).

The "long-range swing from the pastoral legends of the early nineteenth century democracy to the complexities of modern American life," which Hofstadter held, took its ultimate form in the whole of the nation in the 1930s, had, however, for long appeared in the nation's last geographical resort (08). Here, the pastoral legends were immediately transformed into "empires", and as Johnstone contended, the "anomaly of a liberal gentry, which believe[d] the praise of the humble Yeoman applied to themselves" was not strange to the American agrarian tradition (120).

However, this change in the national democratic sentiments, which Johnstone defined as a shift from sympathy to the small farmer to that of admiration to "the individual who rose above it" was also accompanied by changes in the nature of employed labor (149). And in California as Daniel exemplified,

> agribusinessmen were not at all reluctant to attribute a very considerable measure of their industry's success to the fact that they had developed labor policies that gave them absolute control over wages, hours, and most other conditions of employment. (68)

As long as they developed a farm-labor policy which profited from the powerlessness of socially marginal groups (Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Italians, Portuguese, Mexicans, Hindus, and Filipinos), the violent, superexploitive conditions which these groups were subjected to did

not "directly affront[] America's democratic [agrarian] sensibilities" (61). As Majka and Majka confirm, much of the white laborers--and thus of the inter- and intra-state rural migrants--concentrated themselves in "higher-skilled, better-paying industrial, manufacturing and craft occupations," whereas "agricultural low-skilled, low-wage . . . jobs" were reserved for nonwhite "foreign" laborers (10).

Starr affirmed, "there was some real ugliness," and undoubtedly there was (Material 393). But this "ugliness" was not pertinent to the American man. If it appeared, it was neutralized, reduced to those areas that were strange to his identity. It belonged to the East, to the city, and to the foreigners and their occupations.

Notwithstanding, with the Great Depression things radically changed: "the Depression brought [the Americans] face to face with a suffering on a scale they had never before encountered, or reminded them of miseries they had hoped to have left behind" (Peeler 281). The Depression brought them face to face with the accelerated fusion of the East and West, of the city and the country. The West--the last resort--was no different to that of the East. Los Angeles stood in physical power and presence, in social fragmentation and unrest, in a comparable position to that of Chicago of the East (Starr, Material 392).

But perhaps the biggest shock occurred when Americans came face to face with the West itself. The West had not only fused and interconnected with the East, but had surpassed it in many aspects. The last agrarian resort was a world of agricultural empires. It was a world of agricultural machines, all fused and integrated into one powerful network.

One needs only to look at the list of the active members of the Associated Farmers of 1934 to get a hold of the extension and power of this one network: representatives of the different government bodies, representatives of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, of the Southern Pacific Railroad, of the California Packing Corporation, of the Bank of America, of the Canners League of California, of Standard Oil of California, of the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company, of the Industrial Association of San Francisco, of the Spreckles Investment Company, etc. (Majka and Majka 88-93).

For the Yeoman inheritors, to confront this reality was to confront the myth against historical reality. The hope of escaping urbanization receded as these men lost sight of the possible frontiers, of the possible limits, of the possible markers.

The mortgaged, tenant farmers and sharecroppers who were evicted from their lands in

the mid-thirties were Americans who came from the region in which the agrarian myth was perhaps most strongly rooted (Johnstone 120). But these 'mythical men' came to swell the one sector of the state's population which had been historically reserved for nonwhite, non-American groups. Thus "the Okies [as they were all to be called]. . . intruded upon an agricultural system that contravened every myth in the Jeffersonian pantheon . . . " (Stein xi).

The 1930's constituted a turning point in the evolution of American culture. And no one more than the Dust Bowl refugees captured the two levels of the national cultural conflict. The history of their expulsion from the lands and migration to California, of the violent and superexploitive conditions to which they were put to thus constitutes an epic of the American agrarian, liberal dream, and its confrontation with the American "urban" reality is of extreme significance and meaning to the nation.

History had conquered the myth. Indeed, in the final decade of the cycle of political-economic reforms (from the 1890s to the 1930s), as C. Anderson remarks,

> the faith that the farmer was morally superior to townsmen was being challenged by the idea that the farmer was simply another businessman or laborer striving to make money. Finally the fear that the urbanization of America would lead to national decay was being tempered by the realization that the march to the city was necessary and inevitable. (188)

Agrarianism was ceasing to give meaning and value to a great many men. But if agrarianism was losing ground, so was American liberalism, the American exceptionalist quest. As Cowley ("A Farewell"), Howe, Peeler, Starr, and Stott all expressed, the Depression brought the national debate to extremes: Americanism vs. "Europeanism," liberalism vs. collectivism, individualism vs. socialism, etc. And differently from the twenties, the debate had now a clear political stance. It was either chaos or salvation, criticism and/or hope.

Modern industrial capitalism and its consequences were no longer mere realities of the cities. In this context, "the process of urbanization and the autonomy of the 'urban' cultural model [were] thus revealed as paradoxically contradictory processes" (Castells, The Urban 14). In fact, as Marx had noted in his own time, so contradictory were these processes that although "the dispersion of the rural laborers over larger areas breaks their power of resistance which concentration increases that of the town imperatives," with the development of the factories of the fields, "the material conditions for a higher synthesis in the future" are given (The Capital 554-555). The extension of the cooperative character of industrial capitalism to the fields thus

immediately enables the "country-animal" to transcend alienation and reestablish communal life, to establish communist life as well.

Indeed, in 1888, five years after Marx's death, Engels re-published Manifesto in England. There and then, he acknowledged that just as industrial capitalism had conquered the world, so had the "spectre" of modern socialism: "the Manifesto . . . is undoubtedly the most widespread . . . production of all socialist literature, the common platform acknowledged by millions of workingmen from Siberia to California" (5).

McWilliams emphasized, California, the most industrialized agricultural economy of the U.S., had truly been a world of "empires and utopias," where both objective and subjective forces had contributed towards the development of its peculiar kind of agro-industrial production (Factories 28-47; emphasis added). The latter forces were to be found among various experiences which had enhanced class struggle and thus brought about crises of legitimation and necessary forms of reorganization.

But, in the 1930s, as Starr stressed, the crisis was extreme, and "nowhere more so than in California, . . . the left and right cannonaded each other in a regional mimesis of the fascist/communist struggles that culminated in the Spanish Civil war in Europe" (Material 393). In the 1930s, the communists were in the Californian fields with a power and force as perhaps never again matched in this movement's regional history (Daniel 141). And, for the self-professed historical embodiment of the American Agrarian ideal--the Californian industrialist--

> it has been comparatively easy . . . to go one step further, and to identify, in the popular mind, the "Red" or "Communist" with the "foreigner". The hatred of the foreigner is thereby transferred to the radical. (McWilliams, Factories 136)

John Steinbeck, who was never a self-professed communist, through a paradoxically contradictory process was branded "archenemy" of the Associated Farmers in 1939 with the publication of his third migrant worker novel, the epic of The Grapes of Wrath (McWilliams, "California" 32). Our task is to reconstruct this process, to discover how "foreign" his ideas were.

CHAPTER III

A HISTORICAL DIALECTICAL MATERIALIST VIEW OF AMERICAN RURAL LIFE OF THE 1930s

3.1. John Steinbeck: Contrast(s) in Context(s)

Born in 1902 to a middle-class family of Salinas, a small Pacific coastal town of 25,000 inhabitants, Steinbeck was the son of a quiet accountant and of a socially active, learned ex-teacher. Although never fully approving of her son's professional choice, it was Steinbeck's mother who introduced him to the world of letters (Benson, The True 7-21). Steinbeck "was born a 'romantic'." However, as Benson noted, the romantic influence went beyond that of his readings: "his roots were in the adventure of the journey West to California taken by both his . . . grandparents," who moved to the U.S. with the dream of achieving a promised holy agrarian land ("J.S.: Novelist" 109).

If he lived a rather happy, mischievous childhood, in his early adult years, Steinbeck desperately wanted to get a grip of the world. He planned to travel extensively and to establish himself as a journalist in New York (Benson, The True 86-99). But if his plans were early frustrated, his objective was not. Steinbeck continued to labor in his native land, and it is from these experiences that arise his most successful and polemic novels: In Dubious Battle (IDB), Of Mice and Men (OMAM), and The Grapes of Wrath (TGOW).

In 1918 he had his first experience with the dynamics of the state's large-scale agricultural production as he was drafted into the bean fields as a high school cadet (Benson, The True 24). Two years later, as a Stanford English major, he re-initiates this experience, working intermittently in the fields. Most of his extremely varied work (laborer, surveyor, factory maintenance crew member, carpenter's helper, bench chemist, straw boss, ranch hand, dredging crew member) took place in the plants and fields of the world's largest factory of its kind, the Spreckles Sugar Beet Industry (Benson 37-71; McWilliams, Factories 83). He not only became acquainted with the dynamics of agro-industrial production but with the way(s) of life of the ethically heterogenous migratory labor force of California's agriculture. Within the workers' culture(s), different political-

ideological beliefs were sustained, and one particular viewpoint, which particularly grew through the intermittent activities of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) from 1905 to 1917 and later was prolonged through the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (CAWIU) in 1929 to 1934, was of communist perspective and of Marxist influence.

Although acquainted he was, these were not the matters of his first novels. In 1933, as California fieldworkers were undergoing the most intense period of agitation and organization, Steinbeck, referring to his recently published To A God Unknown, wrote to his publisher: "Boileau . . . insisted that only Gods, Kings and heroes were worth writing about. I firmly believe that. The detailed accounts of the lives of the clerks don't interest me much, unless, of course, the clerk breaks into heroism" (J.S./R.O.B. 02/11/33, in Steinbeck, A Life 69).

If in 1933, the clerk, symbolizing the lower classes, had no right to the novel, in the very next year, "the clerk" and the specific valuative quests of "the clerks" acquire heroic stature. The analyses of IDB, OMAM, and TGOW delineate this peculiar growing and changing awareness in which the writer turns towards a new "heroic" and formal exploration.

Steinbeck underwent a dramatic intellectual change which, according to his major biographer, Benson, may have started in 1930, when Steinbeck married Carol and became acquainted with his life-long friend Ed Ricketts. Carol brought Steinbeck closer to the political battles in the fields, to the political radicals of the intellectual, literary realms and of agrarian militant action (of the CAWIU), and to their expressions and inspirations. Ed brought the writer closer to the philosophical and scientific debates related to the biological realms of life ("J.S.: Novelist" 110-111; The True 146, 183-256).

With the combined influence of both companions, Steinbeck awoke to the "sense of living in history." As his letters of the early 1930s express, Steinbeck was gradually becoming more and more involved with the political-economic debates of the time. The world was fighting, and from the fights arose mass movements which radically opposed and threatened the then prevailing patterns of development (Steinbeck, A Life 74-97). Fascist and communist mass movements clashed against one another and against the capitalist liberal political formations. And as friends met, partied, and discussed in Ricketts' biological lab and in Steinbeck's home, as Steinbeck began to frequently visit Lincoln Steffens (who lived nearby), as he began to receive fugitive militants in his own home, and as he delved into scientific and philosophical readings and debates, he became deeply troubled with the battles (Benson, The True 224-269).

So great was Steinbeck's "breakthrough" that by the time of the publication of TGOW he had explicitly embraced that which he had so vehemently rejected in 1933:

> Boileau said that Kings, Gods and Heroes only were fit subjects for literature. The writer can only write what he admires. Present-day kings aren't very inspiring, the gods are on a vacation and about the only heroes left are the scientists and the poor. ("Interview" 861)

The heroes he had selected to write about, in the mid-thirties became the "clerks," and more specifically, the poor migrant workers of the Californian fields. These became the imaginative means to embody the endless battle for a better life which, as he believed, was represented in the rural workers' struggle for the (re)attainment of (their lost) lands (860). His three migrant novels deal with the dialectics of the agrarian dream and the "urban" reality, of the individual's desire and society's impositions, of modernism and modernization.

Steinbeck, as many intellectuals of this period, sensed the 1930s' break and gave expression to it. While many, as the Chicago sociologists, sought reforms, others advocated the construction of an entirely new social structure. Especially in the artistic and literary circles of the 1930s, the ideals of agrarianism, Emersonianism, and Social Darwinism, that had supported both liberal and conservative policies, then seemed too narrow and pusillanimous to face the problems and issues brought by the Depression (Howe 13-14). At such a unique moment in American history, many writers took a "leftward turn".

Communist and Fascist ideas, so "foreign" to the "American tradition," took hold of many organizations, intellectuals, and workers (Howe 18). "Acts of conversion" took hold of the country (Cowley, The Dream 31-45). However, others "stubbornly" held on, and as Peeler points out,

> Many thirties intellectuals searched for an organic American culture that remained permanent and untroubled beneath a Depression plagued American civilization. [They] shared this concern to find some continuum that remained unmarred beneath the Depression's surface. But the continuum that they sought was more of a universal entity rather than a peculiarly American one, for their primary intention was not some sort of cultural nationalism. (07)

According to Peeler, Steinbeck belonged to this tradition which, in the literary realm, brought about the "social novelists" (07). And TGOW, as no other novel, best illustrated this national cultural quest (157).

Peeler found that the social novelists fed the past naturalist tradition, which concentrated on men more as instinctive beings acting within a natural world than on men as overtly social beings or mere individualists. Their break from the past, however, lay within the indictment of

"present social faults, [and in the] den[ial of] the permanence of these conditions" (156).

Notwithstanding, the school of Chicago's urban theory may also be placed within this intellectual tradition and illustrate the "historical temper" of "hope" that Americans had not moved away from the continuum they had initially set out to pursue. Brighter days lay ahead if public manipulation and control were exercised. Excessive population and institutional concentration had to be redistributed in suburbs and villages. Social and political order had to be fragmented. In "Community Organization and the Romantic Temper" of 1925, future social organization had been anticipated when Park called for a "new parochialism" in which "men [were to] seek God in their own village and the social problem in their own neighborhood" (72).

The theory of history of the Chicago sociologists was bound to a naturalist basis and a deterministic methodology, which found its major sustenance within theories of evolutionary biology. Modern man had merely to break away from the "Romantic passion for individual freedom" which overran the need for human organization ("The Mind" 93). Thus it was no mere coincidence that their students were encouraged to read naturalist novels for urban sociological seminars (Bulmer 96). The naturalist novel form--quite like the urban theory--was construed "through the fateful workings of an invincible heredity [nature] combined with an oppressive milieu [urbanism]; . . . within a non-problematical although critical structure" (Swingewood 60). It too was based upon a theory of history in which all mediations between the hero (the individual) and his milieu (society) were practically eliminated. And as in the urban theory, the hero's fate was decided by the novel form (the community forces) itself.

"Social solace" existed in the sense that man could readapt himself to the patterns of natural development. And once "agrarianism" gave expression to values and meanings indissolubly connected to the natural symbiotic processes, this heritage favored the necessary schemes of (re)adaptation. Consequently, "urbanism" was but "agrarianism" transferred to sociology and applied to "urbanized" realities.

The tradition was held. It "remained permanent and untroubled." In fact, the "continuum [which] remained unmarred" was a universal one as well, for the agrarian values were but the universal heritage of all rural/folk societies which moved towards the making of urban constructions (Peeler 07). If America faced mass desperation, it was merely due to the fact that Americans went perhaps further than any other people in terms of the natural processes of development. "America" was undoubtedly exceptional.

According to Peeler, Steinbeck partook of this same tradition and of both traditions of the social novelists as well: of "Social Criticism and Social Solace in Depression America." IDB and OMAM illustrate the former, whereas TGOW, the latter. However, this movement, from a pessimistic to an optimistic vision, did not expand beyond but on the naturalist heritage itself, for, in TGOW, it was the yielding to instinctive forces which worked in favor of the characters' needs and not in opposition, as previously developed (161-164). Peeler's 1987 assertions have a long history. Many critics have, as Peeler, placed Steinbeck in the naturalist tradition as well as in the effective dominant culture. But such affirmations are certainly not exempt of disagreement.

Wyatt, in 1990, made an elucidative revision of Steinbeck criticism on TGOW and depicted three possible historical "phases of response" (Introduction). The phases are denominated as "histrionic"/"pretext" (1940-1955), "formal"/"text" (1955-1973), and "contextual"/"context" (1973-1989). The first phase is marked by critical approaches which basically focused on its "extraliterary" contents, on the (un)truthfulness of the social reality portrayed in the novel and/or the conception of mankind and nature as developed within it. The second phase is coincident with the ascendence of New Criticism (06). The last phase is marked by "the proliferation of engaged approaches" (10).

The first phase quite naturally evolved around the matters brought about with the hysterical reaction to TGOW, for this immediately bestselling novel was not merely bought and borrowed, it was burned and banned as well. Those who capitalized on top of the documentary realism and heroism of the "Okies" cannonaded those, as the Associated Farmers, who attacked its historical, documentary "inaccuracies," its "filthy language" and charged it as mere "communistic propaganda" (Shockley 52).

However, TGOW's powerful response was not confined to the political spheres of life alone. In 1940, Steinbeck won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. But if Steinbeck refused the honor claiming its "dubious" qualities, responses were dubious throughout (Steinbeck, A Life 204-205). Although many immediately found the novel to be the embodiment of the literature of the decade, its classification and appreciation was no simple matter.

TGOW was immediately associated to the proletarian novels of the Soviet socialist realist form of the time. It was banned and praised as such. If for the communist, Mike Gold, in 1941, Steinbeck "[could] be counted as [an] individual agent[] through which the movement [of proletarian literature] reached its highest audience," for Edmund Wilson, in 1940, Steinbeck could

be counted in quite similar terms, however, with a significant difference (Gold 27-28). In "The Californians: Storm and Steinbeck" of the New Republic, which was later reprinted in Classics and Commercials, Wilson wrote, "when the curtain goes up, [Steinbeck] always puts on a different kind of show," meaning probably that TGOW was attending to the leftist, naturalist commercial interests of the time (36). For Wilson, Steinbeck was more of a biologist than a novelist: the Joads were developed in a way "as if human sentiments and speeches had been assigned to a flock of lemmings on their way to throw themselves into the sea" (42). Hence, if the "rise of proletarian and communist ideas in America" achieved its "highest" influence and audience through TGOW, for Wilson, such was in mere quantitative terms, for this novel lacked deeply in quality (Gold 27; Wilson 36). Cowley, Rahv, and the less radicalized Moore--who realized the first extensive analysis of Steinbeck's novels in 1939--also placed TGOW among the great books of social protest of its time, however, all found it to be too didactic ("American Tragedy"; [Review of TGOW]). According to Moore, Steinbeck failed most in character development, which Frohock in 1950 agreed to, stating that Steinbeck's exploitation of wrath was thus what "h[e]ld his pages together" (Moore 140; Frohock 59). As many of the above critics, others continuously discussed Steinbeck's novels of the 1930s in the light of proletarian/Marxist literature, and if Jones in 1940, Nelson in 1967, Aaron in 1968 in "The Radical Humanism of John Steinbeck," and Cook in 1982 all affirmed that Steinbeck was far from a proletarian writer, Beach in 1941, Burgum in 1946, Dougherty, and Moseley in 1962, and Poulakidas in 1973 thought otherwise.

The reactions of Gold, Wilson, Cowley, Rahv, and various others could undoubtedly be interpreted in the context of the 'literary class war' of the time, of the ideological divergencies among the Leftists themselves (e.g. Bogardus & Hobson 1-9; Aaron, "Edmund" 175-186). Tuttleton, who reviewed Soviet literary criticism up to the mid-sixties, found that even in the Soviet Union of the time, Steinbeck's appreciation--which has not been outbalanced by any other American writer--was not without internal conflicts as well (248-249).

However, in the then American hegemony, naturalism was a metaphor for Marxism as well as an approach considered more adequate for the scientific realms of production. Either way, it was thus the writer's philosophy which was to blame for his aesthetic shortcomings, or not. In the first phase, most critics went into the dialectics of this debate. And as a consequence, however, those, who favored Steinbeck's works as "art," believed, as Ditsky came to restate in

1989, that "Steinbeck was no more a naturalist than he was a Marxist" (Introduction 02).

Hyman (1942), Ross (1946/49), Weeks (1947), and Moloney (1950), for example, concentrated on what they conceived as conflicts between Steinbeck's scientific thought and his value judgments. Ross particularly held that Steinbeck's novels were products of a naturalist "position" towards life which, however, was contradictory to his rather religious, emotional bias towards the natural realms ("J. S.: Naturalism" 208). In "J. S.: Earth and Stars", Steinbeck's naturalist position was compared to Augusto Comte's, whereas Steinbeck's value judgments and emphasis on the rights of the dispossessed were contrasted (182).

If these articles contributed towards the delineation of Steinbeck's own "artistic" voice and vision, it was Carpenter's "The Philosophical Joads" and "John Steinbeck: American Dreamer" of 1941 which brought them closer home. Through these two articles, Carpenter attempted to salvage TGOW from any depiction of "Russian"-Marxist influence ("The Philosophical" 85). In the second article, he argued that TGOW was structurally defined in terms of the interplay of the American agrarian dream and the opposition of reality. For Carpenter, the novel ended with the assertion that despite reality, the dream "goes marching on" (467).

Chester Eisinger, in 1947, expanded on this analysis of the Jeffersonian agrarian dream. It was only in 1963 that these assertions were challenged by Griffin and Freedman. Greone, and Louis Owens (TGOW) later expanded this criticism in 1976 and 1989. Carpenter's findings on "The Philosophical Joads," however, are historically less critical. Emerson, Whitman, pragmatism, and Christianity, as influences, are greatly accepted and given further elaboration.

The first phase, basically characterized by the debate on the social philosophy of TGOW, was finally overridden by New Criticism, when many--as Lisca--reacted demanding that the book be "evaluated as a piece of fiction" (The Wide World 148). But even these critics, could not diverge from the initial debate, as the "literary" analyses themselves eventually led towards highly political, philosophical matters.

Hence, different formal trends appear. And although most criticisms evolve around similar technical explorations, interpretations differ. Bible criticism begins perhaps with the work of Shockley in 1956. Biblical structure and symbolism, of the Old Testament and of the New, are appreciated and greatly debated in various works, having Carlson, Schweinitz, Crockett, Dougherty, Cannon, Dunn, Fontenrose, Lisca ("TGOW as Fiction" and J.S.: Nature), Moseley, and, in 1982, Lojek, and in 86, Wyatt (The Fall) as spokesmen of this peculiar perspective.

As Carlson pointed out, the depiction of a religious treatment in the novel came against the initial idea of a scientific, naturalist treatment of materials. However, as Carlson, Lisca, French, and many others came to argue, Steinbeck had a handling of structure and materials of his own. Thus TGOW "is neither romantic, nor mystic, nor Christian; it is an experiential discovery of the process by which "physiological man" becomes "whole man."" As Carlson concluded, TGOW is "a humanistic integration of the knowledge of . . . modern science, philosophy, and art" (102; emphasis added).

It is the latter quality that has made the naturalist status of Steinbeck's novels quite critical. Walcutt (1956), and Braudy (1979), when investigating the American naturalist tradition, clearly pointed to this distinctive factor. Walcutt stressed the writer's major structuring tension between "spirit and fact" in all of his then works. As Gurko had affirmed in 47, and as Lisca later developed in "Escape and Commitment," the organic, critical but non-problematic structure of naturalism is not so easily found in most of Steinbeck's novels:

> Much more frequently we are presented with the characters who chose one of two extremes--either to reject society's demands and escape into individualism, or to reject individualism and commit themselves to goals and values which can be realized only in terms of society. (75)

For Lisca, Steinbeck initially explored the heroic escapees, and in 1936, with IDB, "all of this changes" (80).

Indeed, as French further developed in John (1961), Steinbeck endowed his characters

> with the ability to save themselves morally and spiritually, if not physically, by developing a consciousness in the face of a challenge from forces that it seemed must irresistibly destroy them both physically and spiritually. (44)

In 1961, using a less conventional definition, French placed IDB and OMAM in the naturalist tradition and TGOW in the drama of consciousness genre. However, in 1976, French worked with the concept of modernism--which concentrates on the ironic, double vision of individual and social values as defined by Kierkegaard--and found that IDB and OMAM were modernist, whereas TGOW was "post-modernist."

If most critics, as French, had initially found that Steinbeck could be categorized as a naturalist, deeper textual analyses came to prove that such a categorization was not at all easily defined and accepted. The findings of a second critical trend which focused on various mythical associations and symbols yet further contributed to the difficulty: Was Steinbeck a romantic or a naturalist? French, for example, explored Arthurian themes--a childhood obsession of the

writer, whereas Fontenrose (1963) and Wright (1955), analyzed the presence of Biblical, Greek symbols and mythical, literary analogies. Salazar, more recently, (1990) studied the presence of the "totem meal" and its association to Steinbeck's view on group-man. But Fontenrose, like Ross before him, found that "in Steinbeck's novels biology takes the place of history, mysticism takes the place of humanism" (140). His assertions, however, were contradicted by those of Reed in 1969, Perez in 1972, and Levant in 1974 which, concentrating on other elements of the novel(s), stressed the interactive growth and change of values of the characters.

Due to this polemic, in 1974, the J. S. Society held a forum on Steinbeck's Naturalism, where Copek, Pizer, and Rose presented their findings. All questioned the use of the naturalist category for the novels of the thirties, either relativizing or redefining the concept itself. As Copek stressed, Steinbeck fused a naturalist, scientific, and objective view of life with an optimistic, non-cynical vision (10). And as Rose, who analyzed IDB, amended, Steinbeck particularly "transcended the objective neutrality demanded by his naturalistic technique and expressed his implicit attitudes towards his subject [of the self]" (19).

The use of scientific concepts and theories in Steinbeck's fiction thus also produced a third significant trend, which gained force, particularly, within the third phase of response. Although many had cited Steinbeck's debt to his biologist friend, Ed Ricketts, it was only in the 70s, that greater interest was taken in this particular relation, beginning perhaps with Hedgpeth's 1970 analysis on the biological/ecological influence that the Chicago-born biologist-friend and later, co-author of The Log from the Sea of Cortez--Ed Ricketts--exercised in the making of Steinbeck's own beliefs. In this same year, Shiveley thus gave impetus to the discussion, stating that Steinbeck would have given a naturalist reading to a particular influence of his own, to Josiah Royce's idealist, organic views on man's relation to the whole of nature.

Hence, in 1973, both Benton, and Perez, for example, further expand on the relations between the novelist and the scientist. However, it is Richard Astro that will give the greatest contribution, and in this same year, he publishes John Steinbeck and Edward F. Ricketts. Astro argues that Steinbeck "carefully and analytically forged his own conception of the human ideal" (60). Ricketts' major contribution had been in furnishing the writer with biological/ecological information rather than with anthropological, philosophical idealist views. The latter were to be found in the works of "lesser-known figures as Jan Smuts, Robert Briffault, and Jan Elif Boodin whose premises about man, nature, and the world Steinbeck learned well and used as the

thematic bases of much of his best fiction" (48). Steinbeck's own forging of the "Argument of the Phalanx" in the midst of 1933 to 34 gave greater sustenance to the idea that differently from Ricketts, Steinbeck was "a thorough teleologist who[,despite this approach,] rarely los[t] himself in the intricacies of metaphysics" (73).

Marks in 1969 had already counterposed previous assertions, stating that Steinbeck's "novels do not say what should be but only what is" (26). For Marks, Steinbeck clearly developed in his novels that which he saw: "Man is man because he has the ability to perceive his position in the macrocosm, to perceive that he is "related to the whole thing,"" a perspective quite similar, as Marks found, to that of Jung (82).

As Gray in 1971, and C. Lewis in 1972, critics increasingly become more aware of quite eclectic scientific, anthropological, philosophical sources and influences, to which Motley gives new impetus in 1983, when "From Patriarchy to Matriarchy" is published. Motley found Steinbeck's emphasis on "cooperation rather than competition" in TGOW to have a direct, particular relation with the anthropological assertions of Briffault. Although Motley does not further develop this association, he mentions that both Briffault and Engels "shared a source in Morgan's Ancient Society (1877)," and that "Engels, like Briffault and Morgan, was excited to document a society that fostered "'liberty, equality and fraternity'" and that "'in a higher form'" might be revived" (399).

The Marxist influences in the making of Steinbeck's novels of the 1930's, although considered a dead matter to a great many critics, becomes, within the third phase of response, an increasingly revived and polemic matter. In 1975, a collection of letters is edited by Steinbeck's third and last wife--Elaine--and Robert Wallsten. Benson, in 1976, publishes an article on "The Background to the Composition of TGOW". In 1980, he publishes another, concentrating on IDB. In 1984, however, The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer comes out, and in the same year, DeMott publishes Steinbeck's Reading. A Catalogue of Books Owned and Borrowed. In 1989, DeMott edits the journals of the making of TGOW, and as he affirms, the critical controversy of TGOW is due to the novel's "populist and revolutionary" character" (Introduction xxii). Moreover, as the biographical material expose, Steinbeck's relations with the radical expressions of the time are found to have been perhaps more profound than initially thought.

As early as 1942, Hyman had asserted that TGOW's message was "to the owning class to behave, to become enlightened, rather than to the working class to change its own condition"

(195). As Machiavelli's The Prince, analysts took pains to prove to whom Steinbeck, as Machiavelli, wrote to: to the revolutionary forces, the proletarians of the fields/the bourgeoisie or to the conservative forces, the bourgeoisie/the prince.

Notwithstanding the third and last phase is not merely marked by the sudden biographical publications from 1975 on but by the proliferation of new approaches to literary analysis. In the same period in which urban sociology is being reevaluated, based on new understandings of cultural production, so are Steinbeck's novels of the thirties.

The first year of this phase--1973--is yet marked by Stott's Documentary Expression and Thirties America, which differing from past critical approaches, found that the 30s had produced an emergent cultural expression of its own kind. For Stott, documentary was a didactic form of expression where "emotion counted more than fact" (09). Pragmatism had its share in its making, for experience, other than theory, was the major celebrated didactic means. Stott affirmed:

> Documentary treats the actual unimagined experience of individuals belonging to a group generally of low economic and social standing in the society (lower than the audience for whom the report was made) and treats this experience in such a way as to render it vivid, "human", and--most often--poignant to the audience. (62)

The documentary form thus dealt with that which Williams has qualified as "structures of feeling." The experiences, actions, and thoughts of the men of the time had to be rendered as they were felt, and the feelings had to be rendered as they were experienced, acted out, and thought (Marxism 132). Consequently, the documentary genre challenged the then accepted notion of the scientific, for as Williams, and Lukacs before him, have asserted, structures of feeling ("self-consciousness" for Lukacs) have historically been retained and have had specific relevance to works of art and particularly, to those of literature (Lukacs 214-222; Williams, Marxism 128-135).

However, for Stott, this expression affected both fictional/artistic and non-fictional/scientific productions of the time. In the latter forms, Stott referred to contributions made by Chicago school members, who innovated methods of inquiry with the life-study, descriptive, literary forms of research and writing. For Stott, if social scientists innovated in their description of feelings, fictional writers innovated in their description of facts "at every turn". Documentary fed on and united many new forms of expression. "Reportage" or "three-dimensional reporting" of the U.S.S.R., greatly influenced American journalism, particularly through the new possibilities brought about with the "central media": the radio.

The Dust Bowl, the industrialization of agriculture, the massive migration and unemployment of evicted farmers towards and in the Californian "pastures of heaven," the growth of farm labor unionization and of its communist leadership were all part of the historical experiences of the thirties. TGOW, as a translation of "what the Okies must have felt, travelling from emptiness to emptiness toward a receding goal" was, thus, "the Thirties' novel most closely related to documentary" (62; 121).

Although Peeler's analysis, which we departed from, on the social novelists, comes quite close to that which began with Wilson, one cannot neglect that Peeler's characterization of the social novelists and the "humanist" documentary definition of Stott are quite complimentary terms. Both point towards the making of historically specific literary forms in the 30s which fed on past traditions but broke from previous distinctions. Despite divergencies of interpretation, the 1930s is perceived as a unique marker in the (re)making of the social practices of art and of science.

As Peeler and Stott, other more recent critics have sought to study Steinbeck's novels in relation to the historically specific markers, giving emphasis, however, to the cultural expressions of his specific state or region. Martin, Mullen, Owens, and Wyatt can be read as contributors to this specific realms of criticism. Howarth too, in 1990, gives continuation to Stott's and Peeler's studies, and his title says all: "The Mother of Literature: Journalism and TGOW."

Hence, Steinbeck's novels of the 1930's receive new critical approaches: approaches which, although concentrating on the reading of the texts themselves, find that these same texts house more meanings and have more "external" relations than initially thought by the new critics. Irony was a key word for the new critics. Through the development and exposition of ironic structures, writers would guarantee the most necessary abiding formula of the "willing suspension of disbelief." It is within this same perspective that Levant had aesthetically indicted the final quarter of TGOW:

> the important artistic fact is that "good," divided sharply, abstractly, from "evil," argues that Steinbeck is not interested in rendering the materials in any depth. . . . These qualities deny the conceptual theme by simplifying it, by reducing the facts of human and social complexity to simple opposites. (118; 128)

However, these simple opposite forces were generally interpreted as those interested in the conservation of the hegemonic emergent social formations--as in the depiction of the agro-industrialists--and as those expressing residual cultural elements, as in the supposed nostalgia for the agrarian dream or for the liberal democratic ideals. As Aaron, Benson, Cook, Hyman,

Jones, Lisca, Nelson, Peeler, and others, TGOW is related either to the dominant or to the residual hegemonic political, cultural expressions of the time. Hence, Steinbeck is a liberal, a Jeffersonian, a Jacksonian democrat, an anarcho-Christian nationalist, or yet a Rooseveltian democrat, and the single vision of TGOW expresses his own political views.

Chametzky, nonetheless, in 1965, had perhaps best challenged this view in his questioning of the very idea of the single, non-problematic structure of the novel. As Burgum, and Moseley before him, Chametzky challenged the affirmation of the tenets of Steinbeck criticism, such as those of Lisca and French, which found great merit in Steinbeck's masterful integration of all elements of his fiction. He wrote:

> This is all well and good, but varieties of subject, style, and thought laid side by side are not always susceptible of synthesis--contradiction sometimes remains contradiction--not always to be augehoben (in a Hegelian sense) to some perfect, conflictless sphere, but fated to remain contradiction, evidence of deep, often unresolved tensions. (235)

What Chametzky pointed to is precisely what Williams emphasized in his analysis of hegemony. For Williams, hegemony is a lived process which is not all inclusive. As Gramsci had stressed, hegemony is full of contradictions and unsolved tensions. "Works of art, by the substantial and general character, are often especially important as sources of this complex evidence" (Marxism 114). And as Chametzky specifies--although using different terms--TGOW is particularly important, for it has as a central theme the very conflictive, tense emergence of an alternative hegemony: "towards an ideal of cooperation and a sense of their [the Joad's] connection with other members of the human family" (235-236).

Although adopting different approaches and focusing on different aspects of the novels of the thirties, the critics of the third phase have perhaps given further substance to Chametzky's previous assertions. Moreover, the "engaged approaches"--as Wyatt defined them--have given further emphasis to the quite neglected emergent cultural elements of the novels and of the time. As J. Wilson asserts in 1980, the novels of the 1930s are to be "best understood and appreciated, not as detached work, but as engaged work, work that is concerned with social change" (35).

IDB had best exemplified Steinbeck's alignment to the hegemonic expressions of the U.S. (Jones 453). However, from 1977 to this date, new readings and meanings come about. Pratt in 1977, Sarchett, and J. Wilson in 1980, and Pressman in 1992 reread the novel in the light of

the new biographical material and of past textual analyses of profound depictions. The communist leader, Mac, is found to be the only character who "is fully human," thus, heroic (Sarchett 93). For J. Wilson,

> Both Freud and Steinbeck emphasized the countertendencies of love and hate as inherent qualities in man, but Steinbeck's greatest fiction is balanced by his great hope that man might progress in asserting Eros over Thanatos. (32)

Quite interestingly, it has been in the realms of the feminist interpretations of the late 1980s that further significant contributions towards the depiction of emergent socialist values and meanings of TGOW have been made. As Gladstein, Hedrick, McKay, and Motley express, the most admirable characters of Steinbeck's novels are those which, asserting Eros over Thanatos, assert matriarchal, cooperative, and equalitarian values over patriarchal, individualistic, and unequal ones.

Although conventional definitions of the gender relations are found to subsist in TGOW, these same critics also emphasize the articulation of clear alternative cultural formations in the plot development of TGOW, to which Railton claims in 1990:

> Steinbeck makes it difficult to name the new system that is emerging . . . . It is certainly socialistic, yet a goal of the novel is to suggest that a socialized democracy is as quintessentially American as the individualistic dream it will replace. (28)

Through these new understandings, TGOW is thus related to the counter-hegemonic, (pre)emergent expressions of the time--expressions that, different from Carpenter's assertion, have, as Gold in 1941 stressed, also been part of the American revolutionary experience(s).

The cultural process(es) of the 1930's and of those which involved and affected the writer as well as the very cultural process(es) rendered within the novels are recognized not merely in their "adaptive, extensive, and incorporative" aspects, but as housing, having, and expressing radically new experiences and aspirations which go beyond the limits of the residual and dominant cultural order(s) (Williams, Marxism 114). In fact, they are presented, in themselves, not as a singular process, but as lived and living processes. As Burgum had written in 1946, in disagreement with critics who found this novel as an example of the writer's scientific/religious or rational/irrational confusions and/or contradictions, TGOW's "plot is as dialectic as the events of those disturbing days. It is divided into two contrasting yet interacting lines of development, both vertically and horizontally" (114).

Notwithstanding, although critics have increasingly come about to depict counter-

hegemonic socialist influences and associations, little has been said in terms of their associations to Marxist thought and methodology. As Railton more recently, those critics who do assert socialist links with the American revolutionary tradition and with Steinbeck's most revolutionary novel, little do they go beyond this mere affirmation. As in Railton's text and title, the major stress is almost always to be given to the cultural tradition of the "Pilgrim's Politics" which is found to be rooted within a different list other than that presented by the writer himself: "Paine, Marx, Jefferson, Lenin" (TGOW 194). As Railton affirms, to truly grasp the text, one must look into the works of other names, such as those of "Winthrop, Edwards, Emerson, Whitman" (45).

Literary critics have greatly expanded on the presence of "American" cultural, philosophical formations within Steinbeck's novels of the 1930s and more specifically, within the articulations and developments of the different characters. Through these, they have also greatly pondered on the literary tradition in which the novel forms are to be placed. However, other than denying the assertions of a great many of these past criticisms, I would like to add another influence to the already acknowledged "cosmopolitan" character of Steinbeck's novels (C. Lewis iv). As Martin wrote in 1983, "Steinbeck does present a belief as the goal of Tom's development [of TGOW], but this belief is primarily secular, socialist as well as transcendentalist, and to the end pragmatic" (71-72).

This belief, this cultural, historical socialist influence, is thus that which finds its best expression within the works of Marx (and of Marxists); works, in fact, which were part of Steinbeck's Reading(s) of the time (DeMott 77, 94, 112). Moreover, within a Marxist understanding, I intend to present the theoretical, methodological, and aesthetic development of the novels as constitutive of the very conflictive development of the author himself:

> This procedure can be summarized as the reciprocal discovery of the truly social in the individual, and the truly individual in the social. In the significant case of authorship it leads to dynamic senses of social formation, of individual development, and of cultural creation, which have to be seen as in radical relationship without any categorical or procedural assumption of priorities. (Williams, Marxism 197)

The Marxist concept of the individual--as a social and thus historical, dialectical being--is central to its theory as well as to its demarcation and rupture from other "modernist" expressions. Hence, this modernist transformation of the individual into social being not only allows us to establish relations between Steinbeck's intellectual development and the cultural expressions of his own time, but to evaluate his relation to Marxism and consequently the relation of his novels

to the cultural, intellectual traditions of the Depression as well. As Marx has affirmed, one thing is, at the same time, its opposite. It is through this dialectical understanding that one must analyze Steinbeck's development and the development of his characters and novels. Much has already been said on his conservative-reformist expressions. It is thus time not to simply reject the past explorations but, perhaps, to complete them in the depiction of his, and his novel's opposite/revolutionary aspects. If so much has been said on his American character, it is perhaps time to look into his "alien" character. And careful not to develop a xenophobic prejudice, we might yet come to the questioning of how 'alien' such a view was in Steinbeck's time. Moreover, we must also look into how Steinbeck positioned himself in this same debate, how Steinbeck translated/read the alien views into his own world and how he articulated these within his novels. From an anthropological perspective, we must, as Matta has so vehemently affirmed, relativize not only the certainties of science through the analysis of literature, but the certainties of literary criticism as well. Literature is cultural, material production, and through an anthropological perspective, we must find within the familiar culture (and cultural production), the exotic, and within the exotic, the familiar (143-73).

In the chapters that follow I examine the dialectical interplay of these familiar/exotic forces as developed in IDB, OMAM, and TGOW. My analysis will concentrate on the depiction of the migrant workers' culture(s) in order to compare and contrast it/them to the sociological concept of urbanism as developed by the scientific explorations of the school of Chicago of the same period. My hypothesis is that Steinbeck's rural environments present the very characteristics of urban culture--of urbanism--as conceived by the sociologists of the human ecological theoretical school. The psychological and social characteristics of Steinbeck's rural characters conform to those traits which were sociologically considered original of and most apparent in the urban areas. But if the social and psychological conditions portrayed by the scientists and the artist are similar, the major causes for the making of such conditions are thought to be quite different. What Steinbeck presents as the major causes of the migrants' disintegrative--anomic--experiences dramatically differs from what the sociologists depicted. "Urbanism" is presented not merely as a culturally inherited urban "way of life," but as a historically specific rural way of life, the way of life of industrial capitalism. "Urbanism" is engendered through industrial capitalist experience, i.e., through the experience of modernity.

What sociologists were to expose thirty to forty years later, Steinbeck had already

exposed through his art. The rural(urban) culture of Steinbeck's novels, differently from the school of Chicago's propositions, is not presented as a "secondary 'superstructural'" or an inherited kind of life, nor is it presented merely as a way of life determined by its ecological factors. The migrant workers' culture is presented as "a constitutive social process, creating specific and different 'ways of life'" (Williams, Marxism 19). Cultural history, through Steinbeck's novels, is made material, and labor constitutes its mediating determined and determining factor.

3.2. Characters and Interrelations in In Dubious Battle

In Dubious Battle was written during the second half of 1934 and published in January 1936 (Benson, The True 273, 324). Steinbeck's publishers of the time--Covici-Friede--delayed the novels publication until the editor, who "was strongly rooted in Marxist ideology" and found the book "inaccurate", was fired (315-317). Steinbeck, infuriated with the initial rejection, wrote to his agent:

> the reasons given against the book are all those I have heard from communists of the intellectual bent and of the Jewish race. . . . My information for this book came mostly from Irish and Italian communists whose training was in the field, not in the drawing room. (J.S./E.O. 05/13/35, in A Life 109-110)

The "Irish and Italian communists" of the fields most probably relate to the two fugitive militants of the CAWIU, who used the aliases of Cicil McKiddy and Carl Williams, or to the leaders, Pat Chambers and Caroline Decker, to whom the fugitives constantly referred to. Steinbeck had arranged to buy their story through a series of meetings promoted by his communist friends. As he believed, with their story, he would not only help the fugitives but "at the same time help himself" (Benson, The True 291; Benson and Loftis 201).

At the time of the making of the novel, Steinbeck was greatly involved in the construction of his own peculiar modernist theory which, in a two-page type-script, he qualified as "The Argument of the Phalanx" (Astro, J.S. 63). In a letter to his writer-friend George Albee of 1933, he gave an extensive overview of his theory. Man had discovered the ultimate unit of composition of all matter, the atom. From the atom came the cell. From the cell came the highly complex unit of man:

> That has been our final unit. But there have been mysterious things which could

> not be explained if man is the final unit. He also arranges himself into larger units, which I have called the phalanx. (J.S./G.A. ?/?/1933, in A Life 79)

Man arranges himself into larger social groups--into phalanxes--which have a life of their own. In a letter to Carlton Sheffield, dated June 21, 1933, he noted, "When acting as a group, men do not partake of their ordinary natures at all. The group can change its nature" (75).

Steinbeck clearly asserted:

> We have tried to study men and movements of men by minute investigation of the individual men-units. . . . Perhaps if we observe the phalanx, . . ., we may in time come to know something of the phalanx, of its nature, of its drive and its ends, . . . (qtd. in Astro J.S. 64)

The chronological comparison of Steinbeck's novels clearly denotes that he underwent a change of attitude--of perspective--which is reflected, as Lisca noted, in the development of his fictional characters. Beginning with IDB, his heroes are of a lower-class standing. They no longer seek "escape into individualism" but commitment towards society, towards the phalanx(es) ("Escape and Commitment" 75, 80). However, not only do Steinbeck's characters come about to reject an individualist approach but the writer as well. And Steinbeck's "Argument" is a personal, theoretical attempt of integrating the general dialectical forces of man and society, and the particular, of modernism and modernization.

Steinbeck believed a new world-view demanded a new literary vehicle, and as he wrote, the novel forms made available by the different traditions then "seem[ed] inadequate. . . . Literature of all ages has celebrated the finest thoughts of its time. Not so ours" (qtd. in Benson, The True 267). This period thus marks Steinbeck's beginning struggle with the more mundane trivialities and historically mediated developments of the realist tradition. Although IDB is the first expression of its kind, Steinbeck "had [initially] planned to write a journalistic account of a strike" through the "autobiography" of Pat Chambers as a means of better organizing his ideas (J.S./G.A. January 15, [1935], in Steinbeck, A Life 98; Benson and Loftis 201).

However, it is in IDB that Steinbeck effectively comes to experiment and question his "Argument" (J.S./M.M. 1934, in Steinbeck, A Life 97). Man is a phalanx unit, and "from the phalanx he takes a fluid necessary to his life" (J.S./G.A. 1933, in Steinbeck, A Life 81). However, phalanx-life was not immediately given to men, for man had to "key into" the phalanx (Astro, "Steinbeck and Ricketts" 31). In failing to do so--in defying the phalanx nature--man merely defied his own self--his own nature: he became half-articulate. And as Steinbeck informed Moore, IDB

"was . . . an attempt to make some pattern out of the behavior of half-articulate men" (41).

In his own terms and through his own means--although certainly not excluding direct and indirect contact with Marxist theory--Steinbeck gives expression to that which Marx had denominated as man's estrangement: his estrangement/alienation from his labor, his self, his species-being, and man. "Half-articulate man" is merely another term for "estranged" man, and the alienation of the phalanx-being is merely another term for the alienation of the species-being.

In 1933, Steinbeck thought his theory lacked coherence, "but [he] ha[d] a start" (J.S./C.S. June 21, 1933, in Steinbeck, A Life 77). As he explained to George Albee, in writing IDB, he "wanted to be merely a recording consciousness, judging nothing, simply putting down the thing" (January 15, [1935], 98). While working with politically engaged characters, Steinbeck searched for the exact opposite: "I'm not interested in strike as means of raising men's wages, and I'm not interested in ranting about justice and oppression, mere outcroppings which indicate the condition" (98). Steinbeck was interested in analyzing "the condition" of man's half-articulation.

Major critics have analyzed and come to Steinbeck's philosophical conclusions looking at the non-teleological scientist, Doc Burton--Jim's foil--who doesn't--as the writer--"want to put on the blinders of 'good' and 'bad,' and limit . . .[his] vision [but just] want[s] to be able to look at the whole thing'" (IDB 147). Within this perspective, critics have either given little emphasis to Mac--the communist leader--or have analyzed him in light of what is philosophically totally rejected.

However, Levant found that "Jim, Mac, and Doc suggest a balanced series of responses to group-man and to the necessities of the strike," and that "Mac's point of view is also contrasted with Doc's--and implicitly with Jim's--on an equally ambiguous basis" (83). Furthermore, Mac is found to growingly contrast to the novice Jim as the latter increasingly takes over the direction of the strike. Hence, after Levant, critics as Pratt, Wilson, Sarchett, and Pressman have gone into, "[the] defense of Mac's dubious battle," stating that "although imperfect, at least he represents a human possibility of enacted virtue in an imperfect world" (Pratt 37).

Wilson yet asserted that "the technique employed by Mac and Jim is Marxist praxis, or theory moulded into action to fit the requirements of the existing situation" (42). However, if Mac's attitude, his technique is growingly different to that of Jim's, we might yet come to the conclusion that Mac's "Marxist praxis" is also different. Indeed, Steinbeck asserted that "there

are as many communist systems as there are communists. It should be obvious from the book that not only is this true, but that ideologies change to fit the situation" (J.S./M.M. [April] 1935, in Steinbeck, A Life 107). Hence, once reading the novel, one can analyze the "ideologies" and their changes through their symbolic renditions: through the spokesmen of Jim, Mac, and Doc and their relations and responses to the different phalanx "situation(s)". In the line of criticism that focuses on Mac's development, one may find elements that contribute to the dramatization of the quite neglected cultural influences of Marxism as the writer tried to develop a coherent theory of history that would allow him to find sound explanations to the developments and conflicts of his own time.

As for the situation(s), we must look at the plot of IDB. As already indicated, this story was a composite dramatical rendition of actual events and places (the actual history) as basically delineated by two communist informants. This novel, however, is construed through the basic outline of a fictional character's story, beginning with Jim Nolan's communist outset and ending with his physical death.

In the first pages, the reader is presented to a lethargic, gray-eyed, and gray-dressed young man. As Levant stressed, "a controlled series of images sets the tone and sharpens the meaning of Jim's awareness that he has been "dead" and now is partly alive" (75). His eyes, in fact, only begin to shine once he is accepted into the communist party and given the task of accompanying Mac--a mature, experienced communist leader--to the rural area of Torgas Valley of California. There, apple-pickers had just suffered a radical decrease in wages through the demands of the Growers' Association. The communist task is to foment class struggle through strike action (IDB 32, 29).

However, the first three chapters have San Francisco as their geographical setting, and in the first two, the reader is supplied with the memories, thoughts, and feelings that led Jim to search for a communist rebirth. Unjustly imprisoned and booked for vagrancy, the ex-head of the wrapping department of a local department store relates to communist jail-mates and is overwhelmed with their sense of life (07, 23). Wishing to partake of the peculiar combination of anger, peacefulness, and hope as perceived in the militants, Jim requests party affiliation. When exposing his motivations to the party secretary and later to Mac, Jim states that although he may have more objective knowledge than the communists he met, he lacked the subjective impulse (09, 23). As for the latter deficiency he referred to his and his family's "mind-stuff": a deeply felt

sense of hopelessness that offered and led to nothing (22).

Following a perfect urban pattern of development, Jim's family disintegrated. Jim's father, his mother as well as himself are all presented as having led extremely lonely, anonymous lives. Their lives had been so affected by the social impositions that they failed to develop the protective "blaze' attitude" to fall into a state of total numbness: of "death." This yet led to the secular drive for, as Jim's father who "hated churches," his rather religiously devoted mother, at death, expressed a total loss of faith (06-07).

His father, although lonely, conquered a certain degree of social reputation and was known as "the toughest mug in the country," for he fought "everything with his fists" (06, 15). But Roy failed to engage into "forms of mutual interrelations." His isolated, predatory actions did not allow him to "exert . . . any control" over his desperate situation (Wirth, "Urbanism" 162). And if Jim's fourteen year-old sister, was quite different from the others, as the dramatic outcome suggests, May, if alive, effectively engaged into the urban dynamic, making a life out of the instrumental use of her sexuality (IDB 12).

Jim's extremely individualistic, instable, and insecure "urban"-oriented life had, as outlined by the Chicago sociologists, ironically--dubiously--brought about the very opposite of individual realization: Jim "fe[lt] dead" (08). However, if the dual movement of entering the communist party and the rural fold occurs with the hope of giving end to the ironic, dubious nature of his past urban experience, the "dubious battle" of life, and that gives the novel its title, is yet to occur.

Many critics have interpreted Jim's movement and tragic outcome as proof of Steinbeck's outlook that "as a whole rejects the values of the group and asserts the primacy of the individual" (Lisca, The Wide World 128). To these, Jim's faceless end is symbolic of the ultimate de-personalization that accompanies a total rendition to a collectivist stance. But, if one looks at the different phalanx organizations and at the conflicts rendered by their actions, one is certain to find different levels of conflict between and within them. As Pratt asserted, "the novel is particularly difficult because definitions of good and evil, humane and inhumane, slide into so many different positions and contexts that one is challenged to find moral meaning in it" (36).

The very opposition between urban and rural does not allow itself to be fitted within a neatly set pair of opposites. The very beginning of Jim's journey to the countryside, and his first encounter with "stiffs" that ride on the train with him and Mac, grants the first encounter with the selfish, cowardly, cruel, and greedy nature that later is to be found among various workers that

take part of the strike as well (IDB 38). Through this particular instance, one is granted a first exemplification of the dubious quality not only of the over-all opposing forces but of the very nature of the individual beings themselves.

C. Lewis depicted three independent, interacting phalanxes that make up the dramatical development of the battle: the farmer owners, the farm workers, and the communist party (127). All constitute independent inter- and intra-conflictive social groups, rendering on the dramatical level the highly complex dynamic of the different cultural, ideological traditions. The first and most powerful phalanx is basically controlled by the dictates of the Growers' Association. It includes three big and various small farm owners, political leaders, bankers, newspaper owners and journalists, doctors, judges, policemen , some towns-people as well as some workers. The communists' "use" of Mr. Anderson's small apple orchard as a campsite for the striking workers in exchange for their labor-force is perhaps the first exemplification of this phalanx's dubious nature. Later, when Dick--the "bedroom radical"--collects supplies from sympathizers, he relies on local town and country folk alike. Some collections, however, are given in exchange for Dick's instrumental ability in abating the loneliness of "old Dame[s]" (IDB 197, 239).

The second phalanx--the farm workers--have come from various backgrounds. Not all migrant workers are bindlestiffs and many travel with their families. Lisa, London's daughter-in-law, refers to her childhood days on a ranch (261). Dan was a top-faller, and Sam, a longshoreman. Despite their varied backgrounds, their dream is symbolically rendered through Lisa's "solution(s)." Her dreams of having a cow to obtain milk, cheese, and butter or simply a house, with a floor, and a toilet are representive of a great many (261, 274). As Jim Nolan expressed his past "urban" resentments, one finds that they come quite close to those of the rural workers: "I don't think I resented the fact that someone profited from the mess, but I did hate being in the rat-cage" (24). As explicitly expressed by Dakin--a "natural" migrant leader--their acceptance of the communist participation is merely due to their present "rat-cage" situation. Had they any land, as Dakin, they would most probably "blow . . .[the communists] head[s] off" (84).

Although friendly and liable of great acts of sharing and collectively helping others in need, the migrants' individualist outlook makes them rather suspicious and haughty people to all forms of command and inquiry. Within this context, "it pays to appear to mind your own business" (51). And as one of the men explained to Mac, these men do not like collectively led

movements, for "most o' these guys don't like no officers" (137).

The third phalanx--the communist party--tries to give a certain order to the dubious reality of these people. However, the order they envision is also dubious in its motivations, practical applications, and outcomes. As C. Lewis asserts: "The party members are urbanites who . . . had no understanding of the rural psyche" which, in other words, means that the urban-oriented communists had no understanding of the rural culture, for the "rural psyche" has to be understood in relation to the rural workers' way(s) of life (128).

According to the Chicago sociologists, the culture of individuals has always to be considered on two levels. The conscious intentions and rationalizations of the individuals--the attitudes/personalities--are mediated by an unconscious level of the broad, more or less coherent cultural tradition--the social values/culture--from which they take part of (Park, "Socio., Com. & Soc." 202-209). Values are anchored in cultural tradition, which is a dynamic, organic whole, synthetic and objective. Changes in this system occur when the necessities of individuals and/or of social groups enter in conflict with traditional values ("Succession" 228-230).

As Levant stressed, Dan, besides functioning as the major catalyst force of the strike--once he falls from a rotten ladder--is also the first character "to spell out the nature of the group-man" and thus to spell out the conflictive state of their values (80). So conflictive is the then state that Dan warns Jim of the danger of "the big guy" (IDB 67). Dan has "got feelings in . . .[his] skin," and he senses that "it's just like . . . water heavin' before it boils" (66-67). The metaphor of urban society, as in accordance to Sorokin and Zimmerman, is applied to the rural structure. The supposed rural state of still water in a cold container is not applicable in this context (Donne 179, n. 1). And as Dan professes, when the boiling anger spills out, mob action will take place: "That big guy'll run like a mad dog, and bite anything that moves" (IDB 67).

Dan is old and "when . . . [he] was a young man, . . . [he] used to think somethin' could be done" (66). However, his past experience with attempts of collective organization rendered a rather dismal portrayal. All material conquests were destroyed. All elected leaders sold out, and the Wobblies--the IWW--were far too "tough." "They hated ever'thing" (73). Dan expresses his resentments saying:

> "I lived seventy-one years with dogs and men, and mostly I seen 'em try to the steal the bone from each other. I never seen two dogs help each other break a bone; but I seen 'em chew hell out of each other tryin' to steal it." (72)

The values and actions of the rural workers were far too individualistic and predatory--too animal-

like/"urban"--to allow for any successful attempt of organization. Furthermore, as to complicate the problem, the Wobblies' values were far too oppositional. Nonetheless, Dan avows: "Maybe dogs and men aren't the same as they used to be" (72).

Levant affirmed that Dan's "more artificial role . . . is to personify History" (81). But to listen to "History" is a mere "waste [of] . . . time" in Mac's view. To listen to "old guys like that. . . . [is to] get . . . converted to hopelessness . . ." (IDB 74). For Mac, "most of the time [the workers]'re suspicious, because every time someone gets 'em working in a group the profit of their work is taken away from them" (61). As C. Lewis emphasized, "the party members. . . assume that the conflict . . . is simply an economic dispute between two classes" (128). Hence, the "layout" is to "get a good ruckus going" for "there's nothing like a fight to cement the men" (IDB 30, 29, 31). The communists must use all available material without judgement of taste or feeling to make the men "fight in a bunch" (61; 210). Habits and relations are to be formed and ended as sole instrumental means for communist ends. As Mac justifies, "there aren't any rules a hungry man has to follow" (294).

Jim's hunger for life allows him to increasingly adopt Mac's violent creed and method. Although Jim initially questions Mac's use of Lisa's childbirth to gain group recognition, shows affection towards Dan and Mr. Anderson, and "cl[ings] shivering to Mac's arm" at the site of Joy's death, with Mac's insistence that communists "can't waste time liking people" and that violence is a necessary asset for the cause, Jim surrenders to the convincing arguments (167, 117). Jim's change is manifested midway in the strike--chapter 10--after he assists "without emotion" the beating of various fruit pickers by the picketing squad (186). He felt nothing, not even the gun shot on his shoulder (187). From this moment on, Jim increasingly takes the lead of the strike and accepts the paradox that, as he himself declares, "the worse it is, the more effect it'll have" (IDB 261).

But as the novice takes the lead of the instrumental, objective, and predatory--"urban"--approach, his instructor retrieves. With Jim's total rendition to the communist outlook, Mac achieves the possibility of obtaining, as Gjessing defined, the anthropological view, or in other terms the objective, outside view of his ulterior subjective, inside experience (400). As Jim increasingly resorts to objectivity, Mac increasingly retorts to subjectivity and enters in conflict with his own motivations. Consequently, as Jim reiterates Mac's lessons,

> Mac look[s] at . . . [Jim] with something of fear in his eyes. "You're getting beyond

> me, Jim. I'm getting scared of you. I've seen men like you before. I'm scared of 'em. Jesus, Jim, I can see you changing every day. I know you're right. Cold thought to fight madness, I know all that. God Almighty Jim, it's not human. I'm scared of you." (283)

Mac's striking outburst, although momentary, clearly reflects a sudden illuminating insight: for Mac, Jim's--thus his own--actions are not truly human. They are alienated.

It is with this same awareness in mind that Doc Burton perhaps assumes a major dramatical role as Mac's alter-ego/foil. As Sarchett appointed, "there is more than a hint in the novel that Mac is the intellectual equal of Doc" (93). In fact, Mac is the "Doc" until the true doctor enters into scene (56, 74, 79, 83, 120). Although Mac questions and invalidates Burton's non-teleological perspective and many of his assertions, Mac not only acknowledges but also identifies with many of Doc's ponderings on the nature of man, group-man and action (e.g. IDB 146-152, 235, 328-334).

Hence, Doc's objective scientific stance and statements expose on a conscious level, the unconscious motivations--values--embedded within the communists' plan. Jim, on the other hand, provides Mac with a view of the actions--the outcomes--which are consequential to this method. Through the interrelations established with Jim and Doc, Mac--"one large man, with the face of a scholarly prize-fighter"--is given the opportunity of balancing both thought and action, individual being and social being, intellect and feeling, means and ends (16; emphasis added). Mac is given the opportunity to escape his own half-articulation and the half-articulation rendered to the creation of group-man to develop a fully articulated praxis.

Doc and Mac's associations are various. Doc's activity--he is there "to see the whole picture"--ultimately "erases all distinctions which make human existence meaningful. His views of time, action, and humanity ultimately deny history, morality, and identity" (Pratt 42). Although Mac, quite differently, is there to make the whole picture, it is no accident, however, that when Doc uncovers his intellectual objective and approach, Mac exclaims, "Sure, I get you. In one way it seems cold-blooded, standing aside and looking down on men like that, and never getting yourself mixed up with them; but another way, Doc, it seems fine as the devil, and clean." (201) Indeed, for both characters such an approach is necessary. For Mac, to get emotionally involved is to doom the strike to failure, whereas for Doc, it is to limit and doom the total vision.

For Mac, "there's an end to be gained; it's a real end, hasn't anything to do with people losing respect. It's people getting bread into their guts. It's real. . . " (208). In the exigency of

attending to the people's real needs, it is justifiable that the communists do the thinking for the men. Mac knows that "you can't think if you get mad," and thus it's up to the communists to fight off fury in themselves and strive for its powerful creation among the masses, in the mob (274). "Limited as a weapon, it is nevertheless the only effective weapon the strikers have [to oppose the powerful social artifices of the dominant phalanx]" (Levant 79). As Doc himself declared "group-men" has a life, a nature, and an objective of its own different to that of its individual men (IDB 148-149). "You can't swing nobody that doesn't want to be swung," Mac initially declares, but "with the guys . . . mad" things become quite different (83).

Certainly, the difficulties of phalanx organization and action are various as the "rural psyche" reveals itself quite "urban." The striking workers show little preoccupation with the future of those who help them and whom they depend on (202). The leaders of the strike are constantly questioned about their "true" individual interests, and here paid provokers find fertile ground to work on (94-95, 227-230, 309-310, 324). Even the collective conservation of basic sanitary camp conditions demanded, in one occasion, fruitless argumentation (308-309). Hence, when demanded, phalanx action has either to be related to its usefulness to the different individuals or to its impact on the opposing forces as to be made effective. Needless to say, the latter strategy is the most applied as the furious "big guy/mad dog" is tentively kept alive and active with the "smell of blood" and its feeding of "cat[s]" (315).

The communists' approach is that of "strangers who force their way into a group of workers but who never really become part of it" (Salazar 105). This particular distance between the communists and the workers is rendered through Doc's most ironic observation on Lisa's "solution" for happiness. Lisa merely wants a cow. To this, Doc questions: "Want to exploit a cow? . . . Did you ever have a cow, Jim? . . . "I never thought of cows as counter-revolutionary animals" (IDB 261). Although neither Jim nor Lisa understand the nature of Doc's irony, it is quite evident that Doc is aiming at their cultural/ideological distance. Although the communists manipulate the migrants, such manipulation not only reflects lack of consideration of the migrants' goals but also lack of effective knowledge. Significantly, Jim had never owned a cow. In fact, Jim had never owned anything.

Anderson's final raging attack at Mac contributes further to Doc's questioning. After his property is destroyed by the dominant phalanx, Mac asks for forgiveness, insisting that it was not their fault. However, Anderson totally rejects the request, blurting out:

> "What do you damn bums know about it? . . . "You bastards never owned nothing. You never planted trees an' seen' em grow an' felt 'em with your hands. You never owned a thing, never went out and touched your own apple trees with your hands. What do you know?" (342-343)

What Anderson strikes at is not the communists lack of having experienced ownership as private property, but ownership as man's appropriation of nature, as the objectification of ones labor.

Marx had distinguished objectification from alienation in the sense that the former is the general, natural process involved in man's life-activity, in his labor. Through labor, man externalizes himself in nature, for it is through his production that man faces his own activity, his self, his life. Nonetheless, he only becomes an object for himself once he becomes an object for others (EPM 77-78). He thus views his being as a species-being--a phalanx-being--related to other men.

Anderson's reference clearly exposes his identification--his objectification--with the products of his labor, of his life. He and his apple trees are one. Moreover, his emphasis on that his trees are appropriated through the senses of seeing, touching points towards the form in which "man appropriates his total essence in a total manner, that is to say, as whole man" (Marx, EPM 106). And as we could say, through praxis.

According to Marx, within the historical process of alienation, "what is animal becomes human and what is human becomes animal" (73). Man is merely free--thus human--in his abstractly considered animal functions: "eating, drinking, procreating, or at most in his dwelling and in dressing up, etc." (73). Man is yet rendered below the animal level, in the sense that, "his inorganic body, nature, is taken from him" (76). His species-life is transformed into a mere means to his physiological existence. "[Man is] made so stupid and one-sided ["half-articulate"] that an object is only [his] . . . when it is used by [him] (106)." Alienation historically becomes a total process, pervading every aspect, every group, every individual of society. In a Marxist perspective, the "blaze' attitude," with its emphasis on "use" as here defined, is but a historical reflection which, with capitalism, becomes a total, pervading process in urban and rural areas alike.

However, if this process leads man towards a regressive--inhuman, thus unnatural--state, it does so in an alienated form: a form which, as alienation, is one of estrangement from "the human essence of nature or the natural essence of man" (111). Although human nature is infinitely elaborated by the course of social history, the "natural/human" basis ultimately

determines the limits through which history can impose certain changes as well as the essential potentiality for a change of a more radical sort. This "natural"/"human" essence thus functions as a marker for both exploitation as well as liberation. Hence, if alienation is a total process, it is not one of an absolute character. As "estrangement" it can thus be perceived as "strange" and change can be aspired (124-127).

Mr. Anderson and Lisa function as such liberating markers. Mr. Anderson, as a struggling, small independent farmer represents a residual, oppositional experience to that of the alienated agro-industrialists (The Capital 554, 835; The German Ideology 68). Anderson has, despite the present difficulties (which will most certainly "break [him] and put [him] on the road") of experiencing a more humane relation to his labor and to nature (IDB 117). Henceforth, Anderson represents "the humanism of nature" (Marx, EPM 104).

Lisa, the nurturing mother, likewise, also represents a radically opposing experience. As Anderson and his apple trees, Lisa and the baby are one: "she looked self-consciously down at the baby" (IDB 261). Her interests and actions are those that will bring about its well-being, and her relation to the baby presupposes no "use" whatsoever. Her "natural"/"human" relation towards the baby directly opposes the "unnatural"/"inhuman" relations established among the various opposing men. Lisa represents the primal mother-child harmony: "the naturalism of man" (Briffault 37-44; Marx, EPM 104). And it certainly is no coincidence that Lisa is to reappear, always suckling her baby, after chapter 13, when the violence of the strike achieves its peak through Jim's directions.

As such, both characters represent different mediating aspects of the Marxist Utopia--of communism--which for Marx,

> Only here has what is to him [to man] his natural existence become his human existence, and nature become man for him. Thus society is the consummated oneness in substance of man and nature--the true resurrection of nature--the naturalism of man and the humanism of nature both brought to fulfilment. (104)

However, those men who supposedly labor towards the end of alienation--thus towards communism--also display a vivid exemplification of an alienated and alienating alternative. The dubious quality of the Communist approach lies in the fact that Mac and Jim's labor, instead of liberating man, of bringing about the truly natural and human in man, further alienates the men. It severs effective praxis as it further reduces the men to their animal/"urban" level. Their approach yet places the workers in disadvantage to the animals, for their human species-life,

their potentially free, conscious activity is further hidden from them. And it certainly is no mere coincidence that the "animal" they deal with is constantly associated to an infuriated, "mad" one.

Indeed, in the developing context of the novel, both the dominant and the communist phalanx act upon the workers as alienating forces. However, other than achieving a "self-neutralizing ambivalence" as defined by Astro, Steinbeck emphasizes that the greatest violence--the greatest alienation--is exercised by the dominant phalanx (J.S. 128). The first nine chapters intensely describe the social conditions through which the migrant workers (and small farmer owners) are daily dehumanized. If the battle between farmers and communists is a dubious one, it is clear, however, that "the battle lines are drawn by the owners . . . " (J. Wilson 41). What Steinbeck dramatically puts to question is the form through which this battle is to best to be fought, if the communists are effectively, as Mac states, "just helpin' it go straight instead of shootin' its wad" (IDB 156).

These previous conclusions could easily lead one to resort to the contrastive figure of the scientist Doc. "But if this character carries the more important meaning, why, one wonders, does he appear in only one-third of the novel, then disappear quietly and without definitive explanation?" (Pressman, "Individualists" 124). Moreover, Doc's values are alienating as well. Doc can find no explanation for his job. Throughout his life he "worked on [men] just as though they were wood." (IDB 262). In his final appearance in the novel, his bewilderment--his alienation--is vividly displayed to Jim: "I don't know; I'm lonely, I guess. I'm awfully lonely. I'm working all alone, towards nothing. There's some compensation for you people. I only hear heartbeats through a stethoscope. You hear them in the air" (265). As Jim, he is drawn towards Lisa's warmth, but as with Jim, Lisa too rejects him (323, 350, 265). Their sexual failures merely emphasize their inability to engage within genuine human/natural relations (Marx, EPM 100-101).

Doc's insistence in serving all humanity--"the other side is made of men [as well]"--never effectively allowed him to act (IDB 262). As Jim, Doc too was tentatively going in a straight line, however, in a world that is not straight at all. "Doc and Jim, although possessed of different levels of understanding toward both the strike and themselves, share predicaments and, certainly by no accident, similar fates" (Sarchett 91). Jim is "pure religious ecstasy", the self-sacrificing egoist (IDB 263). Doc is his selfless counter-part, "all acceptance and resignation" (Sarchett 93). He too "pretty often" feels as Jim, subsuming the group into his own self, however, and "particularly when [the men]'ve done something stupid, when a man's made a mistake and died

for it" (IDB 90, 206-207).

Midway between the two predicaments and approaches, one finds the figure of Mac and of his--although certainly not full--significant development, for as the strike is brought about, Mac gradually comes to the awareness that his theory is limited and yet dangerous: "It's damn funny about a bunch of men, how they act. You can't tell. I always thought if a guy watched close enough he might get to know what they're goin' to do" (277).

Ironically, Mac thought he knew how to give impulse to the "the animal" and how to control it through the use of a "plan," despite ever knowing what lead him to do so. When Dakin questions Mac interests within the strike, Mac is angered and unable to respond: "We ain't gettin' nothin'.". . . "You don't know it unless you believe it. They ain't no way to prove it" (156). However, when alone with Jim, Mac admits the total ignorance of his motivations: "I wonder why we do it" (159). Later, when Al's lunch wagon is destroyed and Al requests party affiliation, again Mac ponders on the matter: "By God, it's funny. Guy after guy gets knocked into our side by a cop's night stick. Every time they maul hell out of a bunch of men, we get a flock of applications" (205).

Mac too was most certainly "knocked into" the communists' side by a "bunch of American Legioners all full of whiskey and drum-corps music" (24). Like Al's declaration, Mac's development also expresses that one's interest in the communist cause is basically stimulated by the desire of personal revenge. As Al cries, "I want to be against 'em . . . I want to be fightin' em all my life. I want to be on the other side" (204).

Al's emphasis on opposition in detriment to cooperation, points towards that which Dan, from the very beginning, had pondered on: communists are defined in terms of their opposition/hate, not towards their identification/love towards a group. Dan declared: "they hated ever'thing" (73). This particular assertion sets immediate ties to Mac's declaration in which he "like[s] anything" (111). Hating everything and liking anything amounts to the same thing.

Doc had perceived this. His outside--anthropological--view had allowed him to perceive that the communists are nonetheless,

> "practical men always lead[ing] practical men with stomachs. . . .[And] in all history there are no men who have come to such wild-eyed confusion and bewilderment as practical men leading men with stomachs." (150)

As Doc suggested, Mac's "real" goal of "people getting bread into their guts" neglects the fact that there undoubtedly are "rules a hungry man has to follow," not because he is hungry but

because he is man (294). For Doc, the communists "start [their] work not knowing [their] medium. And [their] ignorance trips [them] every time" (294).

Doc's words resound every time the communists are "tripped" by their ignorance. And it is no less significant that, in the moment of greatest despair, it is Mac who not only comes to regret and assume responsibility for Doc's loss, but for all losses and for the strike as a whole (275, 335). Although Mac initially professes and deals with the men on the basis of "cold thought" and on the view of the "whole thing," he growingly becomes personally and emotionally involved with the migrants' and Anderson's problems, and fears for the immediate outcomes. Immediately after Joy's death and Dakin's imprisonment, Mac declares: "I get so scared the strike'll crack, . . . Well, it's my strike--I mean, I feel like its mine. I don't want to see it go under now" (192).

It is through this emphasis on the spontaneous identification of Mac with his labor that the dialectical movement of the dubious battle is rendered. The forces, which destroy group unity, create the need for its revival, in a different--perhaps, more total--form. From the struggle towards the obtainment of man's animal needs arises the struggle towards the attendance of man's human needs. And particularly, from Mac's struggle towards the creation of group unity arises the struggle towards collective--cultural--identity. From mere understanding/thought, Mac moves on to acquire a more profound level of understanding which involves comprehension and feeling as well. Without Jim, Mac begins to "forget[] the whole picture," to give way to "lost feeling[s]" (275, 177).

However, if the growing conflict in Mac brings about some certain potential dangers towards the strike as initially planned, it too brings about more positive developments and plannings. Mac who had initially instructed Jim to go about "sound[ing] out the men" in a selective and manipulative manner, towards the end, is requesting that they go about "and see how the guys feel" (74, 332). He then tells London, if one concentrates merely on mob/animal action, one is liable to forget about one and another's own feelings: "when you get mixed up with the animal, you never feel anything" (332). Mac is torn between his traditional thoughts and his new feelings. He thus expresses his conflict, stating, "the Party ought to get rid of me. I lose my head" (320). His growing and conflictive "failure to act as a Party machine, however, is a measure of his success as a man" (Sarchett 95). And as one can surely note, as a phalanx/social and total man.

Mac gradually begins to "key into" the phalanx and its action and thus into his own self and his own actions. When London finally requests that Mac speak out stating who he is, what he does, and why, Mac manages to articulate the response he had initially failed to. He affirms: "Well, it's hard to say--you know how you feel about Sam an' all the guys that travel with you? Well, I feel that way about all the workin' stiffs in the country" (IDB 268). In his own way, Mac expresses his preoccupation/identification with the men he works with.

Doc had earlier stated:

> "You might be an effect as well as a cause, Mac. You might be an expression of group-man, a cell endowed with a special function, like an eye-cell, drawing your force from group-man, and at the same time directing him, like an eye. Your eye both takes orders from and gives orders to your brain." (149)

Doc's use of "might" draws to the idea of a future possibility which Mac's later development points at. Mac, acting merely as a causing agent of the "animal" formation, begins to act as an causing effect of a more human formation. "The eye has become a human eye, just as its object has become a social, human object--an object emanating from man for man" (Marx, EPM 107). It is only when Mac starts to relate humanly to the people that he begins to perceive the necessity of a more humane formation as well as he begins to perceive his own human motivation. As London later questions Mac's enjoyment amid such difficult and dangerous situations brought about in the battle so that man may "live like a man, and not a pig," Mac responds that communists perhaps obtain far more pleasure "than most people do. It's an important job. You get hell of a drive out of something that has meaning to it, . . . The thing that takes the heart out of a man is work that doesn't lead any place" (IDB 292, 297).

Mac realizes that man has necessarily to express himself in his labor and to recognize his expression as his own as to find meaning in the social world. And it is significant to note that only after Mac begins to perceive the "animal" as a human/social animal, he then perceives himself as a human/social being. Towards the end of the novel, he warns Jim that London's leadership has to be respected for he is the chosen leader (284). He tells Jim that, despite all difficulties by then presented, the men know "what they are, an' what they've got to do" (333). And when Jim--the "Party machine"--questions if the men have "got brains enough to see it," Mac responds affirming, "Not brains, Jim. It don't take brains. After it's all over the thing'll go on working down inside of 'em. They'll know it without thinking it out" (333). Mac affirms that all "senses [are] . . . theoreticians" and that the men, as human, social beings, have the capacity

of perceiving their world and their relation to it through the mediation of their activities and their senses (Marx, EPM 107).

The strategy, from Joy's death on and with Jim's leadership, is to corner the men into a fight, to leave them with no other alternative than to fight for their lives (IDB 192). Nonetheless, Mac and Jim "keep switching sides" as the final round up closes in (333). The fear of further deaths makes them question their approach and the likelihood of its success. However, the distinction between Mac and Jim's attitude towards violence is most forcefully expressed in the particular moment when Mac rejects Jim's sacrificial act of bleeding before the crowd as if rejecting all illusions (334).

And truly all illusions are shattered. In a totally unexpected context, two men come into London's tent and, in the name of the remaining group, request a meeting to vote on the future of the strike (353). The men expose not merely the preoccupation with their own lives but their respect towards the group institutions and elected leaders. The men are not about to "run" as earlier predicted (352). Of the three leaders, Mac is the only one able to respond. Mac is overwhelmed and immediately accepts the request: "The men are the bosses. What they say goes" (353). Quite significantly, Mac reassumes the lead and accepts the possibility of giving end to the strike. As he ponders, "if they don't fight, well anyway they don't just sneak off like dogs. It's more like a retreat, you see. It isn't just getting chased" (353). Mac clearly expresses his praise towards the fact that the men, acting on the basis of cooperation, can act as men and not as "dogs". Even his "plans" now merely involve talking; "tell[ing] the men straight what a strike means, how it's a battle in a whole war" (354; emphasis added).

But before the meeting, Jim is shot dead. Mac, who carries Jim's faceless body back to the crowd, tries to stir up the men in the same manner and with the same words as previously done with Joy. As with Joy, Mac's emotions are true (356). Mac is deeply affected. However, different from the speech as used with Joy's death, Mac adds one single word that brings about a whole new perspective to the dubious battle: "This guy didn't want nothing for himself--" . . . "Comrades! He didn't want nothing for himself--" (356; emphasis added).

"Comrades" expresses a relation that gradually and quite conflictively emerges throughout the novel and takes its pre-emergent expression in this one single final notation. As a communist notation, it gives expression to Mac's honesty towards the crowd. Mac, who was constantly worried with the survival of the leaders, now puts his own life in stake, exposing himself to the

crowd, however, not in a egoistic power-willed, self-sacrificial manner as occurred with Jim.

Quite like that which Marx had affirmed, Steinbeck developed a dramatical outcome in which the contradiction between the egoist and the self-sacrificing individual is presented as a mere apparent one: "egoism, just as much as self-sacrifice, is in definite circumstances a necessary form of the self-assertion of the individuals" (The German Ideology 105). Jim's faceless end is truly symbolic of his ultimate de-personalization, however, not one that is simply and necessarily consequential to his total rendition to a collectivist stance, but to a collectivist, egoistic, alienated one. In fact, Jim and Doc defied the phalanx and thus defied their own selves. They did so, for as Williams noted in The Country and the City, and Steinbeck gave life, it is the lived and living

> world in which the dominant mode of production and social relationships [that] teaches, impresses, offers to make normal and even rigid, modes of detached, separated, external perception and action: modes of using and consuming rather than accepting and enjoying people and things. (298; emphasis added)

Of the three posed alternatives, Mac is not the only one who survives, but who also "manages to act despite the knowledge that his means are inhumane and yet maintain the tie to humanity that both Doc and Jim relinquished" (Sarchett 96). Mac even manages to act despite the growing tension between his received thoughts and developing feelings, and he does so, because, as he finally expressed to London, it is within one's job--within one's active relation with nature--that one not only is alienated--"urbanized"--but that one finds meaning to one's self and one's world--that one is enabled to transcend alienation/half-articulation. In fact, the cultural direction of the ongoing strike gains force with the final conditions we are left with: London, Mac, and the men, although imperfect, have come to new discoveries, and thus promise a "real[er]," a more fully developed, human direction.

Marx argued in terms of alienation:

> The fact that under favourable circumstances some individuals are able to rid themselves of their local narrow-mindedness is not at all because the individuals by their reflection imagine that they have got rid of [as Jim], or intend to get rid of [as Doc], this local narrow-mindedness, but because they, in their empirical reality, and owing to empirical needs, have been able to bring about world intercourse. (The German Ideology 106)

It is in the development of his militant job (which immediately ties Mac's needs to those of the laborers--to the object of his work--in the empirical "disorder," in the "thrust, almost crazy, that mobs have") that world intercourse pre-emerges (J.S./G.A. Jan 15, 1935, in Steinbeck, A Life 98).

In Mac's own description of his capacity of adapting to the different speeches of the different men, Steinbeck foreshadows the character's own developing fusion of the alienating dichotomies: in Mac, "it comes out, perfectly naturally (145)."

Steinbeck's labor, his novel writing, immediately gave him the fundamental pre-conditions for the transcendence of his own alienation. The novel form, defined by the dual interplay of the hero and his reality, by the narrative development which is based "on the assumption that man can act, that he has a measure of free will, and that the choices he makes are made from genuine alternatives," thus thrusts upon the writer, by the nature of its form, the very acts of judging and ranting, that he had initially, and consciously avoided (Benson, "J.S.: Novelist" 106).

Steinbeck, brought up as a romantic, in the 1930's, was drawn ever more closely to the scientific, to the "novel proper," and to social consciousness and activity (105). As Benson contends, such a shift in emphasis was basically determined, if not wholly, by Steinbeck's established relations with both the biologist-scientist Ed Ricketts and his socially conscientious and active wife, Carol Hennings (110). However, as later critics assert, his contacts with the socialist/radical expressions of the time, both in the Californian fields and in his own personal intellectual and emotional relations, also mediated this particular personal and dramatical change.

The battle for human life is undoubtedly dubious as men, clinging to dubious alienated forms of perceiving their position and objective in the world, become "blind to reality and [are] . . . victimized and even destroyed by the real nature of [their] environment" (Benson, "J.S.: Novelist" 106). Man must, as Doc well asserted, seek for the view of the "whole thing," however, as Mac demonstrates, such a view must come and will only come through one's interaction with the "thing" itself. "Doc's creed threatens to transcend all, but Mac's passion yanks the whole bank onto the firm ground of engagement" (Martin 82). And as we may add, to the firm ground of praxis.

Although Steinbeck is yet merely beginning his journey towards a more socialist expression and worldview--towards a more socialist end--his means are already socialistic. In 1936, the year of the writing of OMAM, is the beginning year of Steinbeck's first politically oriented trips and journalistic recordings to/of the Californian rural problem (Benson, The True 332). Immediately after writing OMAM, he makes his first extensive trip to the fields and writes his first news article. In November, he takes part of the "Western Writers' Congress" of the

League of American Writers of strong socialist and communist orientation, and from here on, the F.B.I., and later the C.I.A., put him under continuous surveillance as a writer involved in "Un-American Activities" (Aaron, Writers 306-307; "Annals" 60-61). In 1937, he visits the Soviet Union, and writes an article against fascism in Spain, Italy, Germany, and in his own home country which later is published in Writers Take Sides by the same socialist oriented League.

Notwithstanding, the very form in which OMAM is conceived and produced, also immediately manifests Steinbeck's growing awareness of the necessity of socially engaged labor. OMAM is produced for the theater, and it is taken, by the writer himself, to be performed by a socialist oriented "labor theater group," called The Theatre Union which began in 1934 (Benson, The True 351).

He became, according to Loftis, "an impassioned advocate of labor, but also a man so certain of his cause, on the basis of firsthand experience, that he could not tolerate disagreement" (Benson, The True 350). If Steinbeck gave way to activity and passion, it was due to the perception, as IDB demonstrates, that

> subjectivism and objectivism, spiritualism and materialism, activity and suffering, only lose their antithetical character, and thus their existence, . . . in a practical way, by virtue of the practical energy of men. Their resolution is therefore by no means merely a problem of knowledge, but a real problem of life, which philosophy could not solve precisely because it conceived this problem as merely a theoretical one. (Marx, EPM 109)

The theoretical/scientific Burton, as the Chicago sociologists, pointed towards the fact that the world changes and is going to change whether one wants it to or not (IDB 146, 262). However, Doc and Jim's tragic end, and Mac's surviving development rendered, as Marx and the Marxist critics of urban sociology asserted, that one's knowledge will inevitably contribute towards the change also whether one wants it to or not, thus men "have a responsibility to . . . see that [their] . . . knowledge is used for humane changes, as we define humaneness" (Berreman 394).

OMAM can be perceived as a little exercise in defining humaneness, in giving greater development towards the necessary definition of the naturalism of man and the humanism of nature.

3.3. Characters and Interrelations in Of Mice and Men

OMAM, as IDB, was marked by a quite conflictive production. One conflict occurred when a "good dog" destroyed half of what Steinbeck had entitled "Something That Happened" (Benson, The True 331). This title reiterated one aspect of Ricketts' philosophy--the non-teleological approach--which Steinbeck valued and had already experimented with in IDB (Astro, J.S. 106-108).

However, as Astro contends, Steinbeck's own phalanx ideas, "that man, as a thinking, figuring, creative individual, must align himself with the phalanx that . . . safeguard[s] rather than subvert[s] individuality," contradicted Ricketts' refusal of defining purposes and of judging analyzed forces at work (125). "Is" thinking was to become a method, a dramatic form with few narrative interruptions, a means towards the understanding of not merely what and how things happened but why as well (107).

Such an assertion becomes clear once we analyze the formal conception of the 1936 production of OMAM. Steinbeck defined the "play-novelette" as a form which would allow him to expose his views to those humble people he wrote about, but who did not have access to his novels (Levant 130; Benson, The True 326-327).

When the play-novelette became public in 1937, readers and audiences found that it again dealt with the plight of agricultural laborers of California, however, different from IDB, the dramatic intensifications of the Depression were not present. The individuals had not yet suffered the overriding consequences of mob action and thus seemed whole and final.

Incidentally, the seemingness of psycho-social wholeness is expressed in the literary genre Steinbeck worked with. In May 1936, Steinbeck wrote that his "play-novelette" was a "minor tragedy" (Benson, The True 327). Some years later, Steinbeck wrote: "man might be described fairly adequately, if simply, as a two-legged paradox. He has never been accustomed to the tragic miracle of consciousness" which Steinbeck qualified as "man's greatest burden and . . . glory" (The Log 96). Although moving phalanx motion is a consequence of the paradox itself, man need not partake in mass motion to gain tragic conscience. Man may gain consciousness through his paradoxical everyday life, if, as Mac in IDB, he does "not surrender to despair, but will do battle against the impersonal forces in the universe and treat [his] fellows with love and compassion" (Astro, "J.S." 64).

OMAM, in many aspects, gave continuation to this theme. It begins with two bindlestiffs--Lennie Small and George Milton--on their way to a new job contracted by an agency in a nearby

city. The names of the characters and of the locals immediately set the mood and evoke much of the forces that will bring about the developing actions. George and Lennie had run away from Weed and are on their way to Soledad to work on a grain farm of one owner. The meaning brought about by Weed and Soledad--of "rank loneliness"--is immediately contrasted to the original companionship of the two, which is rendered through the paradox of the characters' names and beings (Spilka 170). It is George who is "small", and Lennie, "huge" (OMAM 02). But if their physical beings contrast to their names, their personalities are quite related:

> Small . . . means subhuman, animal, childlike, without power to judge or master social fate. His friend's name, George Milton, puts him by literary allusion near the godhead, above subhuman creatures, able to judge whether they should live or die. (Spilka 171)

Moreover, "the name Leonard means "strong or brave as a lion," and . . . George means "husbandman" (Lisca, The Wide 139).

In IDB, the workers' moving phalanx was rendered animal, sub-human characteristics. In OMAM, Lennie Small is the animal, sub-human phalanx unit. He is constantly presented as a "bear," a "horse," that has "paws," that "snorts," and that acts "like a terrier who doesn't want to bring a ball to its master" (2-3, 9). George, the "master"/"husbandman," is, therefore, comparable to Mac and Jim of IDB. George tentatively functions as the head--the lacking human brain--of the "one big animal."

If IDB was an attempt of "mak[ing] some kind of pattern out of the behavior of half-articulate man" within powerful moving phalanxes, in OMAM, half-articulate man is basically analyzed in a microcosmic, more lax situation (Moore 41). This microcosm is construed through three localities: a little spot by the Salina's River, the workers' bunkhouse, and the barn. These settings are distributed in six scenes--chapters--beginning and ending with the river scene. Within this development, three days pass by. The novel begins on Thursday evening and ends on Sunday evening. Of the ten characters, no more than five assume major roles in the basic plot development. The latter, quite like the previous novel, is construed through the basic outline of a character's story, beginning with Lennie's contraction of the new job and ending with this character's physical death.

From the beginning, Lennie is found to be carrying a dead mouse which he takes pleasure in petting "with [his] . . . thumb" (OMAM 06). Lennie Small, "dumb bastard like he is, . . . wants to touch ever'thing he likes. Just wants to feel it" (41). As his name--Small--expresses,

the child/animal like innocence is revealed in his overwhelming lust for physical, sensual, affectionate contact with all objects, be them mice or men. And in the context of the Soledad farm, his unconditional affection towards George finds its only parallel to that of the bunkhouse dog to Candy. But "Leonard's" superhuman strength--as that of IDB's group-man--harms and, at times, kills whatever he affectionately and unconditionally puts his hands on. Because of his "homicidal gentleness," Lennie is liable of not merely killing mice but men as well, whom he basically relates to in the same terms (Frohock 127). Therefore, when Candy's dog is shot to spare itself and the men from further suffering, Lennie's fate is foreshadowed.

However, Lennie is not a total nuisance. Different from Candy's dog, Lennie is not decrepit, and his force, if dangerous, at times, is quite handy (06). Slim, the head of the grain team, comes to greatly admire Lennie's capacities. As he states to George: "I never seen such a worker" (39). However, Slim comes to admire something else in Lennie: "He's a nice fella," . . . "Guy don't need no sense to be a nice fella" (40).

Marks compared this novel to IDB and found that the characterization of Slim comes quite close to that of Doc Burton, but with "one major difference" (61). What this critic noted, in fact, comes to reassert the conclusions I have arrived at. In the former chapter, I asserted that the development of the different characters, and more specifically of Mac, tends towards the celebration of activity, of active thinking, of praxis. Hence, it is interesting to note that "in the evolution of this hero type, Steinbeck has made Slim less of a talker and more of a doer, more of a man of the people; less of an abstract "voice" . . . " (61-62).

Slim, quite like Doc, is a "gentle, understanding, and quietly wise [man] in his acceptance of the way things are" (62). However, not only is Slim the given leader of the grain team, but he is, as Candy well noted, different from the boss and his son Curley: "Slim don't need to wear no high-heeled boots on a grain team" (OMAM 28). Slim's leadership, as London's (and Mac's later development), is an organic one, a naturally accepted one. Different from Doc Burton, Slim is not awaiting the view of "the whole thing." Slim wisely intervenes in the activities and experiences of the men for he makes part of them. He has the subjective, inside cultural view as well: "His ear heard more than was said to him, and his slow speech had overtones not of thought, but of understanding beyond thought" (33-34; emphasis added). In Slim, all senses are theoretical ones. Slim understands through thought and feeling.

Therefore, it is no less significant that, of all characters, Slim is the first to note the positive

difference between Lennie and George and the other rural men. Slim knows that the rural world is of extreme "isolation, rootlessness, and alienation" (Shurgot 39). He knows what George always recites at Lennie's request:

> "Guys like us that work on the ranches, are the loneliest guys in the world. They got no family. They don't belong no place. They come to a ranch an' work up a stake and then they go inta town and blow their stake, and the first thing you know they're poundin' their tail on some other ranch. They ain't got nothing to look ahead to." (OMAM 13-14)

As George and Lennie's ritual citation denotes, the way of life of the rural migrant workers is highly individualistic. The extreme loneliness, the anonymity, the lack of family ties, the instrumental, secondary relations (bindlestiffs "blow their stake" and withdraw from loneliness in "cat-houses") comes very close to the characteristics of "urbanism" as defined by the Chicago sociologists. In fact, even before they arrive in Soledad, George and Lennie are tricked into getting off at least four miles ahead of their destiny (04). And as George and Slim later reinforce, the action of the driver (as that of the bindlestiffs on the train to Torgas in IDB) is no different from those of the laboring ranch men:

> "I seen the guys that go around on the ranches alone. That ain't no good. They don't have no fun. After a long time they get mean. They get wantin' to fight all the time."
>
> "Yeah,". . . "They get so they don't want to talk to nobody." (41)

Although, as in this conversation, it becomes quite clear that it is the form of the rural "life activity" made possible to them that basically determines their individualistic way of life, there also is an intruding and determining "urban" view of life--of urban institutions--which comes to determine the lives of the rural men as well. The "Western magazines" with their stories on the "Dark Rider," as Curley's wife's dream of getting into the "pitchers", are what the "ranch men love to read [about] and scoff at and secretly believe" (OMAM 17, 46, 78).

Thus the urban intrusions represent the artficial ideals of escape of the men. Although the men "scoff at" them--the men know they have no factual basis in their lives--they "secretly believe" in them, as these dreams give meaning and direction to their lives. They thus constitute the means of individual subjective sublimation which Wirth thought typical of the urban areas (Urbanism 162). Curley's wife's insistence that she could have escaped from her extremely lonely life to be "s[itting] in them big hotels, an' had pitchers t[aken] of [her] . . ." reveals the extent of her frustration as well as the values and meanings she withholds--values and meanings which are no different from those of the other rural men (78, 89).

Curley's wife, as Crooks, is extremely "isolated within and segregated from the white, predominantly masculine world of the novel" (Shurgot 40). Thus "the Hollywood ideal of the seductive movie queen is her only standard of love" (Levant 142). Although it is a masculine, "urban" standard of love; quite ironically, it is viewed as the only possible manner of achieving social recognition within a masculine, "rural" world.

As Levant emphasized, the "ultimate irony . . . is that none of the characters is evil[,] . . . all of them are trying to express some need of love" (142). All characters are expressing their need for companionship, the need to relate with other men, which their rural/"urban" way of life ultimately impedes. As Curley's wife affirms, whenever the men are alone, she manages to get along fine with them, but when in a group, they refuse to talk with her. And as she concludes: "Ever'one of [them]'s scared the rest is goin' to get something on [them]" (77). In a world where one's survival is guaranteed in individual terms, "man's species being, both nature and his spiritual species property, [becomes] a means to his individual existence" (Marx, EPM 76).

All characters which are organically woven into this world experience and express their alienation. But Lennie stands out amid them: he lacks the faculties which would allow him to be so. Undoubtedly, Lennie is strange to and estranged from the world of men, but his alienation is qualitatively different. If Lennie is estranged from the "humanism of nature," he is closer to what the men are far from. Lennie, as Lisa of IDB, is closer to the "natural essence of man" (Marx, EPM 111). As Lisa, he thus extolls the forces of the primal mother/child harmony, which Briffault qualified as those of companionship and independence (37-44).

According to Briffault, love is nothing more than a human evolutionary concept based on social bondings (39). Nonetheless, "the origin of all social bonds . . . is that created by mother-love" (44). The latter, for Briffault, is the human outcome of the animal relation between the mother and her offspring, and its "purely physiological" basis lies in the act of suckling (37). It is during the child's nurturing period that companionship and independence are developed, first between the mother and child and later between the group of siblings. And as Briffault speculated, this natural/human relation most certainly gave basis to primal agricultural associations based on matriarchial--collective, cooperative, equalitarian--production and values (96). The transition towards patriarchy was thus attended with a definite shift in production and values based on domination and exploitation (207-208).

Lennie certainly extolls these matriarchial/rural values, however, within a

patriarchial/"urban" order. And it is this unconventional, paradoxical characteristic which constitutes his "greatest burden and . . . glory," for if it brings about great misunderstandings, it also brings about "understanding[s] beyond thought." As George confesses to Slim, he used to feel "God damn smart alongside of him" until, after various tricks and constant thankings from Lennie, he began to question his supposed superiority (OMAM 40). As he told Slim: "I ain't so bright neither, . . . If I was bright, . . . I'd be bringin' in my own crops, 'stead of doin' all the work and not getting what comes up outa the ground." (39) But as Slim responds: "it jus' works the other way around. Take a real smart guy and he ain't hardly ever a nice fella" (40).

With Lennie, it "works the other way around," because Lennie associates with all men, women, animals, and objects spontaneously. He does not approach them with blaze' motivations of use and is thus never spontaneously afraid of someone "get[ting] something on [him]" (77). He has and expresses that which the lives of the others nullify; yet, what they all plan for.

Thus George, relating with Lennie, finds that they "ain't like [the rest]. [They] got a future. [They] got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about [them]." As George goes on:

> "If them guys gets in jail they can rot for all anybody gives a damn. But not us." Lennie broke in. "But not us! An' why? Because . . . because I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, an' that's why." (14)

George and Lennie, differently from others, have "got [some]thing to look ahead to." They have got the companionship of each other and yet a dream, a dream of independence--of living "off the fatta the lan'" (14).

However, if they have each other, in practice, it becomes quite obvious that it is George who carries the greatest responsibilities. Lacking the powers to judge the motivations of the other beings, Lennie is a potential victim of "social fate." When frightened by these encountering situations, he is further victimized by his superhuman strength, for Lennie's immediate reaction is to desperately hold on to whatever is at his reach. And here he causes great harm to others. The supposed rape in Weed, Curley's crushed hand, and the killing of Slim's puppy are only three examples of Lennie's paradoxically destructive power.

George is constantly annoyed with the dangers they face and with the major responsibilities he assumes. He constantly shifts from one dream of independence to that of another. One dream is of independence from the external, forced impositions of "urban", patriarchial society and which promises greater subjective, holistic relations between George and

Lennie, between them and nature (57-58). Another, which excludes Lennie, seeks a more tranquil living in the society of rural laboring men. As he repeats, without Lennie,

> "[he] could take [his] fifty bucks and go into town and get whatever [he] want[s]. Why, [he] could stay in a cat-house all night. [He] could eat any place [he] want[s], ... Get a gallon of whiskey, or set in a pool room and play cards or shoot pool." (11)

George's dilemma is precisely the dilemma of the urban sociologists. And as the sociologists, this character is also haunted by the phantoms of the rural past. He is haunted by the "central image [of] the earthly paradise," by the image of the American dream handed down from Jefferson and Paine (Fontenrose 59). However, if this agrarian/modernist dream gains meaning with Lennie, it also, paradoxically, losses its direction with Lennie. With these thoughts in mind, George alternates between the rural/matriarchial and the urban/patriarchial ideal poles of the anthropologically conceived continuum. He thus alternates between the rural/urban practice and dream. Ultimately, he mediates between modernization and modernism. The "phantoms," if not in the streets, are in the fields, however, in the "soul" as well.

The most probable way of life is the "urban" one, which, nonetheless, is the rural way of life itself. One dream negates the other. And the first three chapters "build up a strong pattern of inevitability, the [promising "urban"/patriarchial] movement is unbroken" (Lisca, The Wide World 137). But, midway in the third chapter, "there is set up a countermovement which seems to threaten the pattern" (137). This countermovement is precisely the moment in which the residual, oppositional dream gains a factual, possible basis, the moment Candy decides to partake of the dream and to contribute with all his savings (OMAM 60).

Though the dream is made possible in the evening of the first day of work, it is shattered two days after. Martin wrote: "in OMAM, . . . the simple Edenic order . . . is under threat by an Eve-figure, herself an early victim of the lurid attractions of city-life" (15). The character of Curley's wife, although a woman, has more of the historically defined patriarchial/"urban" characteristics and is a victim of these. That she has no name and is defined in terms of her relation towards a man yet further contributes to this evaluation. However, as the novel expresses, it is not simply the problematic of the lurid urban/male intrusions into the rural, but the "urban"/male structures within the rural which give basis to the adoption of the city attractions. And in this context, Curley's wife's "urban" fantasies are more of "a danger rather than a release" (15). As finally developed, they are dangerous not merely towards men but towards her own self.

Her Hollywood/urban fantasy is yet dialectically interwoven with George, Lennie, and Candy's rural dream, and it is no mere coincidence that when both meet, both suffer the same fate.

On the ranch, the most "helplessly alienated characters besides Candy are Crooks and Curley's wife" (Shurgot 39). But Curley's wife, different from the other two, refuses to give way to her socially imposed inferiority, and recognizing Lennie's easy-going sociability and lust for sensuous pleasures, she uses them to break away from her loneliness and to indirectly strike back at her possessive husband.

Curley's wife entices Lennie into stroking her hair. As he begins, he can't stop, and the situation in Weed is repeated. However, Lennie in panic, as she begins to scream, holds desperately on to her head, covering her mouth with his other hand: ""Oh! Please don't do none of that," he begged. "George . . . ain't gonna let me tend no rabbits" (91). Curley's wife doesn't stop, and Lennie moves from panic to anger. In anger, Lennie loses control of his physical power. Unwillingly, he breaks her neck. Once experiencing anger, Lennie, as the group animal of IDB, loses control of his actions and of his being. As "the big guy[,] . . . [he] runs like a mad dog, and bites anything that moves" (IDB 67).

When Curley discovers his wife's body, he immediately recognizes Lennie's guilt and organizes a group to get him. George knows Lennie's journey has come to its end. Lennie most probably will be lynched, or, at best, will be taken to prison or to an insane asylum. But here Slim replies: "An' s'pose they lock him up an' strap him down and put him in a cage. That ain't no good, George" (OMAM 97). Slim's "understanding beyond thought" perceives that Lennie, as Candy's dog, has no better alternative than to die. When Carlson sacrificed the dog, Candy regretted not having shot the dog himself (61). Thus, when Lennie is to suffer the same fate, George secretly gets the "Luger" used to kill the dog. "The death of Curley's wife switches the narrative focus to George and to the device of the split hero" (Levant 143).

According to Levant, Steinbeck constantly made use of this device, and in OMAM alone, Steinbeck "propels [the secondary character] . . . into a sudden prominence [which yet] has no structural basis" (143). However, as analyzed in IDB, when Jim dies, it is Mac--a secondary character--who survives, who suffers, who reassumes the leadership, and who gives a new dimension towards the battle. And in OMAM, when Lennie dies, it is George--a secondary character--who survives, who suffers, and who gives a new--previously and carefully developed--dimension towards the dream of companionship and independence.

As Lisca had pointed out, "a more subtle and significant similarity [between OMAM and IDB can be found] in the structure in which the major characters relate to one another" (J.S.: Nature 78). In IDB, it was in the interrelations between the major characters and their representative responses to the phalanx expression of the strike that we came to the "defense of Mac's dubious battle" (Pratt 37). And in OMAM, it is in the interrelations between the major characters and their representative responses to the phalanx expression of the agrarian dream that one may come to the defense of George's "dubious [everyday] battle" as well--of George's "dubious" dream.

As in IDB, in this novel, the opposing forces are quite complex and again do not allow themselves to be fitted in neat opposite pairs. George himself is not totally opposite to Lennie. And it is due to this paradox that George is enabled to envision his alienation to the naturalism of man as well as his distance from the humanism of nature--from the hegemonic "urban" way of life.

When George associated with Lennie, he did so spontaneously. He had no underlying instrumental suspicions nor desires, for Lennie had what George and all migrant men have distracted from. On the other hand, the other men, and George's relations with them, represented what George, once with Lennie, was distanced from. When George related with others, his immediate reactions were those of a haughty, suspicious man (e.g., OMAM 18, 24, 59). Moreover, his desires, which excluded Lennie, were mere desires towards his own individual satisfaction, and when including others, did so in mere instrumental terms of "use".

For George, the agrarian dream only gained meaning with Lennie--his only companion before arriving at the ranch. Lennie, ultimately, was the very embodiment of the dream. Thus his death, impulsed by "social fate," but catalyzed by Lennie's socially negated natural impulses and his superhuman strength--his flaw--was the death of the dream itself. "When Lennie dies, the teleological dream of the Edenic farm dies with him, for while Lennie's weakness doomed the dream it was only his innocence that kept it alive" (Owens, "OMAM" 148).

If it is Lennie who physically suffers the tragic incident--split characters as they are--it is George who suffers the most evident tragic emotion and vision, even because it is he, of the two, who has the natural and historically given abilities to do so:

> "I should of knew," George said hopelessly. "I guess maybe way back in my head I did." . . . "--I think I knowed from the very first. I think I knowed we'd never do her [the dream]. [Lennie] usta like to hear about it so much I got to thinking maybe

we would." (94)

George achieves the understanding that their belief has no factual basis, no historical basis. George finally comes to the awareness that Crooks--the personification of history--earlier voiced. As Crooks had told Lennie:

> "I seen hundreds of men come by on the road an' on the ranches, with . . . that same damn thing in their heads. . . . They come and they quit an' go on; an' every damn one of 'em's got a little piece of land in his head. And never a God damn one of 'em ever gets it. Just like heaven. . . . Nobody never gets to heaven, and nobody gets no land. It's just in their head. . . ." (75)

More significantly, without Lennie, thus without companionship, it loses its meaning, its natural basis. Candy insists on the continuation of the dream despite Lennie. George negates it, and retrieves to the counter-dream of "urban"/rural independence:

> "I'll work my month an' I'll take my fifty bucks an' I'll stay all night in some lousy cat house. Or I'll set in some poolroom till ever'body goes home. An' then I'll come back an' work another month an' I'll have fifty bucks more." (95)

In total opposition to the previous moments of the "urban" redemption's recitation, the tone and the modifiers here used clearly denote a new understanding and valuation of this alternative. It is the extreme loneliness, the rootlessness, and isolation, other than independence which is now emphasized. The "urban" counterpart is no longer rendered as an alternative ideal, but as an unescapable crude reality. George comes to the ultimate awareness that "what [he] longed for in his dream of individual freedom was exactly what he deprecated in his dream of living with Lennie on a small ranch" (Fontenrose 58).

Crooks, the learned and experienced crippled black stable buck, as Dan of IDB, also gave expression to the conflictive state of the rural/"urban" men, which, in the "lax" phalanx context of OMAM, is nonetheless the expression of their most inner everyday conflicts:

> A guy goes nuts if he ain't got nobody. . . . a guy gets too lonely an' he gets sick. . . . sometimes he gets thinkin', an' he got nothing to tell him what's so an' what ain't so. . . . . He got nothing to measure by." (72-73; emphasis added.)

A lonely guy ultimately surrenders to secondary, predatory, instrumental relations, for they alone mediate physical and social subsistence within the hegemonic order. Moreover, without companionship, it is either the "urban" or "agrarian" illusions of individual and heroic achievements which come to give them the very elements to "measure" and thus to give direction to their lives. However alienated, they alone vouch for a more agreeable pattern of survival in the "urban" order of the lonely rural men. And as Crooks earlier affirmed: "Maybe [Lennie] can

see . . . . [Lennie--different from others--has] got George" (72).

But Lennie cannot "see." Lennie, incapable of making his life-activity human activity--the object of his consciousness and will--cannot "see" nor subsist in the human world, needless to say, in an alienated one. Lennie can neither come to establish agreeable relations within the hegemonic order nor to partake within an alternative formation. Unable to understand the dominant social codes and relations as oppositional to his needs and desires, he is unable to intervene seeking the necessary changes.

Of the two, it is only George who can "see." And George does come to "see" Lennie as lacking in the necessary historical awareness for one's survival and thus assumes the responsibilities merged within it: "George will accept . . . his humaneness, his responsibility for actions which the animal Lennie, for all his vital strength, cannot comprehend" (Spilka 172). However, it is significant to note, that George only effectively comes to "see"--to "accept his humaneness"--once he has come to measure that of his own and, yet, through that of another--through that of Slim. As Crooks had affirmed, it is through the opinions and experiences of others that men measure those of their own: "Maybe if he sees somethin', he don't know whether it's right or not. . . . He can't tell. He got nothing to measure by" (OMAM 73). It is only through Slim's "understanding beyond thought," that George comes to the awareness that Lennie's sacrifice is the only form of preserving him from further, worse sufferings. His sacrifice is the only form of preserving George's spontaneous commitment to Lennie.

"The dream of George and Lennie represents a desire to defy the curse of Cain and the fallen man--to break the pattern of wandering and loneliness imposed on the outcasts and to return to the perfect garden" (Owens, "OMAM" 146). The dream, henceforth, represents a desire to defy the curse of the creation of the city--of the pattern imposed by the city's culture. It is the defiance of the city, however, in the field. The dream of having a little piece of land in which they would consume what they planted, they would plant what and how they wanted to, they would receive whom they wanted to is the dream of returning man to the realms of his humanity (e.g., OMAM 57-58, 76, 95-96). It is the dream of returning man to the realms of free labor, of spontaneous, conscious life-activity. It is the underlying dream of "urbanism"--the dream of all modernism(s).

This agrarian/modernist dream of individual freedom and social cohesion takes a symbolic form in "the little spot by the [Salinas] river," for, as the dream, it too "symbolizes a retreat from

the world to a primeval innocence" (Lisca, The Wide World 135). And as Lennie--the representative of the most primeval urges of man--enters this most primeval area, the wind, which "sounded" with "gust," suddenly "died, and the clearing was quiet again" (OMAM 99).

The movement of history--of the Edenic dream--stops and dies out as Lennie--its originating and killing force--enters the most primeval area of nature. History stops as Lennie, "from out of his head" ponders on his condition and future prospects; "from out of his head" he sees no future, no bunnies, no comfort, no pleasure, no independence, no companionship (100-102). The residual, oppositional dream of the yeoman farmer--of the American Edenic paradise--is ultimately rendered impossible by Lennie's own inabilities and, quite significantly, by Lennie himself in the secluded grove.

It is quite clear that Lennie is more sensuous than thoughtful, more animal than human. However, being more than another does not reduce him to either one of the poles. Lennie suffers a tragic impact in accordance to his capabilities, and it is important to note that, once alone in the secluded grove, his consciousness speaks out through two interconnected representative figures of the dream itself: firstly, through the vision of Lennie's maternal carer, his deceased Aunt Clara--"a little fat old woman"--and secondly, through an overemphatic expression of Lennie's most important aspect of the dream--"a gigantic rabbit" (101). Both condemn Lennie's thoughtless actions as well as the dream, precisely due to these same actions and to their impact on George and to their relationship (100-102). The rabbit speaks: George is "gonna beat hell outa you an' then go away and leave you" (102).

But George, who immediately comes to the grove, does not "beat hell outa" him. As Lennie himself replied, "He won't do nothing like that. I know George" (102). He does not know, however, that George has just undergone the "fifth dimension" and has come to ironically "reenact the crime of Cain to demonstrate the depth of his commitment" (Owens, "OMAM" 148).

> So he asks [Lennie] to face the Gabilan mountains, which in East of Eden are said to resemble the inviting lap of a beloved mother; and like a bedtime story or prayer before execution--or better still, like both--together they recite the familiar tale of the friendship farm (Splika 178).

The symbol of the maternal being, which represents the most basic denominator of the of species-being of man, (re)emerges in the form of the mountains. Significantly, it is towards this natural, affectionate need for the other that Lennie should look at to gain comfort before his ultimate comforting act--his death.

When George enters the grove, Lennie wants to be reassured that their relationship is to remain. George's reprehension is thus a form of assuring them. Lennie insists: "Ain't you gonna give me hell? . . . like you always done before" (OMAM 103). George begins, but when Lennie, as always, says he could go off on his own so that George could carry out his counter-dream of independence, George is vehement in his negative response, "No," . . . "No," . . . "I want you to stay with me here" (104).

Despite all adversities, George still wants Lennie. George still wants his spontaneous companionship and independence. But to keep them, to preserve them from external harm--from the harm of historical "patriarchal" society--he must kill Lennie. George must kill the given "matriarchal" agrarian associative forms. As the setting sun of the initial chapter represented the transition of one order to another, the setting sun of the final chapter again recreates the transition.

As the shouts of the men--of the intruding "patriarchal"/"urban" society--are heard, George begins to recite the dream and prepares himself and Lennie for the shooting. At this very moment, "the little evening breeze bl[ows] over the clearing and the leaves rustle[] and the wind waves flow[] up the green pool" (104). The movement of history re-begins.

The wind--"the movement of history"--""Destroyer and preserver" both; . . . scatters "the leaves dead" and carries forward "the winged seeds" (Railton 28). This symbolic use, which takes its greatest form in the second interchapter of TGOW, there appears associated to animals. The little seeds--the little spears carriers of new life--"all wait[] for animals and for the wind, . . . all passive but armed with the appliances of activity, still, but each possessed of the anlage of movement" (19).

George kills as to preserve Lennie, but also that which he ultimately represents. As he kills, the seed of independence and fellowship, however, is preserved. And as the wind reappears, another animal--a possible carrier of the seed--reappears as well. Slim, of all ranchhands, comes "directly" into the secluded grove. And Slim, perhaps, the most 'human', the most understanding, the most 'natural', the most spontaneous, of all ranchhands, comes and sits "down beside [George] and s[its] very close to him. "Never you mind," said Slim. "A guy got to sometimes" (OMAM 107; emphasis added).

George had been distrustful of all migrant men and women, with the exception of one single man--Slim. Slim and George's relationship is, from the very beginning, established in

terms of spontaneous admiration and affection. It is yet significant to note, that Slim does not come to partake of George, Lennie and Candy's dream of having a piece of land of their own. George's pre-emergent relation with Slim, as with Lennie, has no previously defined and handed down responsibility. Neither does it have any previous instrumental interests, as is the case with Candy. As with Lennie, Slim "just come[s] along with [him]," quite naturally (40). Only with Slim did George develop a relationship--an understanding--which, as with Lennie, went "beyond thought." The companionship which gave meaning and origin to the dream of independence is thus preserved. "The anlage of movement" is passed on, however, in a more elevated--human--sphere: Slim, and, particularly, George's relation to Slim, represents a possible historical mediation between the opposing ideals and practices.

In the end of IDB, Mac's single word, "Comrades!," brought about and emphasized the new quality rendered in his association to "group-men." It was man's species-nature and his human species-nature which was dramatically--and problematically-- celebrated. In OMAM,

> Steinbeck's forceful prose . . . with the key word "directly," and the emphatic repetition in the last phrase place heavy emphasis on Slim's gesture. Steinbeck is stressing the significance of the new relationship between George and Slim. (Owens, "OMAM" 148-149)

Again, it is man's species-nature and the associated matriarchal relation and values which are conserved and celebrated. George, who could most possibly retrieve to the "urban" dream and thus further negate his previously expressed and exercised social/human need, retrieves to Slim's companionship. Certainly, they do go off into town to have a drink, however, it is significant that they go together, and it is so significant, that the novel ends, precisely with Carlson, "look[ing] after them" and commenting; "Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin' them two guys?" (107).

As with Lennie's companionship, where George was always expected to have an explanation based on instrumental use, and which was immediately supposed so due to Lennie's mental (in)abilities, with Slim's companionship and with his "authority"--superiority--the "practical men" are baffled and find it quite difficult to find an immediate response. However, the response is in Lennie and in what he represented, the naturally evolved urge for maternal, brotherly warmth. It is in Slim's and George's animal nature--their species-nature--where the anlage of the dream lies. However, it is in their human nature--in their conscious interactions with the whole of nature/society--that differently from Lennie, the survival and the movement of the anlage of the

dream may effectively thrive.

That IDB finally emphasized the species-nature of man through a single noun, and that OMAM does quite the same, however, through a single action and through the emphasis on this action is a quite related but significant change. Mac and Jim had a clear theoretical conception of group action, but one which, as the strike developed, began to fall short of explanation and effectiveness. It was in the spontaneously developed social relations and in the spontaneous expressions of one's feelings and thoughts that, particularly, Mac pre-emerged as a man more able of riding himself of alienation and of thus bringing about "world intercourse."

In OMAM, the characters have no consciously articulated nor sophisticated theories as to indict the historical social order, and thus neither do they have any "lay-outs" nor programs that aim at the overthrowal of it. Despite Lennie, however, most characters express a knowledge of the fact that something is undoubtedly and profoundly wrong. It is the inability to name this something that brings about their bewilderment. Candy, Slim, Curley's wife, and Crooks all express their vital confusions and deep desires of defying the confusion.

In his own way, and through his own means, Slim expresses the belief in which the major confusion lies within the differentiation between man as a general social animal and a particular cultural historical one: "Seems to me sometimes it just works the other way around. . . ." (OMAM 40). As Crooks later affirms, man has a gregarious impulse and need; however, society, and all that is involved within its culture, further removes/estranges/alienates man from this need and pushes him towards the development and pursuance of other needs. That Crooks chooses a dignified but lonely life--"A colored man got to have some rights even if he don't like 'em"--is a significant historical and thus particular mediation (82). Nevertheless, his choice, as of all others, is never expressed as a fulfilling one, for always one is left with the choice of either one or the other, and never allowed the choice and fulfilment of both. The dream of land is precisely the historical expression of the desire of the latter, and Lennie stands out as the carrier of the dream for he exalts the very need which historical society negates.

Lennie, who extols the natural/animal forces, and thus, basically, if not only, the natural forces which mediated the labor of the past ages, curiously provokes a recurrent reaction of both surprise and of identification among most characters he interrelates with. Lennie's mere presence raises the question of both the subjective and objective aspects of the characters and of their world, of their interests and desires and of those of the collectivity they mediate with. In

merely three days, all that come within Lennie's range externalize their internal antagonisms, and those most suffering beings, yet, come to question their then perspectives on human relations.

The very devise of the split heroes is explored in such a way which does not allow for easy answers. Although sympathy and pity may lie with Lennie, Lennie is not regarded as an alternative promising end. He, as Jim Nolan before him, however contrary in prevailing and developing characteristics, is but a critical tool to George, as was Jim to Mac. That Lennie and Jim are but tools, does not presume instrumental interests and use. To affirm that they are tools is but to affirm that they are instruments of labor both to themselves as well as to others, to the whole of society and nature. Labor has been built into them and arises from them, and it is in this constant relation of being determined and of determining which brings about constant changes. Jim and Lennie are but indexes of man's half-articulation, and the bending back to the primitive--to the suppositions of the most primitive impulses as in the communists' layout and in Jim's leadership based on food and mere survival as well as to Lennie's most primitive impulse towards natural/social contact--dramatically functions as basis for the critique of the social/individual condition of modern historical man.

Labor, in fact, appears as a key element. The retrieval to the past that George, Lennie, Candy, and Crooks--if but for a moment--envision, no matter how illusionary, already and immediately points to a key differentiation to the Biblical world of either/or. Their dream does not propose a retreat to the garden of Eden, but to the "East of Eden." They do not seek the world of non-labor: the Edenic world where "of every tree of the garden [man] mayest freely eat" (Gen. 2: 16). What they seek is to gain the pleasures enabled with the curse God set on man: "to till the ground from whence he was taken" (Gen. 3: 23). What they dream of is thus not to consume freely, but to produce freely. What the migrant men dream of is to free themselves from the curse set on the generations of Cain and of Canaan: the curse of being left to roam the earth with no place as ones home, the curse of being dominated and segregated by man and from man, the curse of the city (Gen. 4: 12, 9: 25, 4: 17).

Wyatt explored what he believed to be a recurrent theme in the productions of this author: the sense of displacement and the search for home. All of Steinbeck's characters express a sense of loss and a longing for reacquisition. This longing is thus expressed in absence. That women--the ultimate expression of the historically most profound loss--if not totally, but quite significantly, are absent within IDB and OMAM, comes to further contribute to

this expression.

Perhaps the companionship Steinbeck found in Ricketts, in which, for some time, Ricketts became his main source as to measure his own self and together their world, is thus rendered dramatical quality and potential in both novels of the thirties. Mac's "fellowship" with London and the migrant men, and George's relation with Slim pre-emerge as problematic but more promising future developments. And, as in IDB and OMAM, it becomes clear that for Steinbeck, the means for reacquisition is social commitment; man must commit himself to man.

And to do so, is merely to commit to one's own self, to "commit [oneself] . . . far enough to social reality to be[come] conscious of [the extremely profound, even inborn--unconscious--] sociality" (Williams, "The Writer" 86). It is in "the formations of feeling and relationship[,] . . . [the most] immediate resources in any struggle" that Steinbeck begins to envision the light at the end of the dark tunnel (Williams, "You're a Marxist" 76). Thus to commit is to follow the light within darkness, and as Benson affirmed, for Steinbeck "the only light [one] ha[s] is the light [one] create[s] for [one]self" (The True 250). Consequently, as Wyatt observed, "Steinbeck's career tells many stories: of the dance between the one and the many (the "phalanx" theory), of the primacy of middles over ends ("non-teleological thinking"), of the "warring qualities," not of light and darkness but of different kinds of light" (127).

The refusal to submit to either one of the extremes, however, is accompanied with the refusal of compromise. As in IDB, there is a clear refusal to submit to the "shades of grey," that as rendered in Jim Nolan's initial standing, promise a more tranquil, however, elusive and thus unfulfilling life. Different from the Chicago sociologists, the redmption of "urban" man must be accompanied, not by a necessary positivistic resignation, but by a negativist refusal to submit.

Williams resumes:

> People change, it is true, in struggle and by action. Anything as deep as a dominant structure of feeling is only changed by active new experience. But this does not mean that change can be remitted to action otherwise conceived. On the contrary the task of a successful socialist movement will be one of feeling and imagination quite as much as one of fact and organization. ("You're a Marxist" 76)

From the publication of OMAM to the writing of TGOW, Steinbeck engages in an "active new experience" which will undoubtedly affect his own "structure of feeling" and thus his novel writing. And as Owens asserted, "the dream of man's commitment to man . . . will appear again, in fact, in much greater dimension in [his] next novel, . . . ("OMAM 149). Hence, in TGOW, Steinbeck

will go further into the search for this different kind of light. In this novel alone, a women character will assume a more significant role. From Curley's wife's destructive force, Steinbeck will return to the to the portrayal of the powerful constructive maternal forces as initially, but secondarily rendered in Lisa. Ma Joad and Rose of Sharon come about as forceful characters in the dubious battle for light and thus for home. In their renderings and in their interrelationships, one can thus depict how far Steinbeck went in this search, and as many critics contend, Steinbeck did not go far enough. However, TGOW marks the furthest point he ever reached in his whole career.

3.4. Characters and interrelations in The Grapes of Wrath

Published on April 14, TGOW was immediately sold out. Midway in May, it became the nation's bestseller. The book which metamorphosed the tragic suffering experience of 500,000 evicted farmers of the U.S. Central plains into a paradoxical magnificence, at the end of the year, held a total sales number nearly equivalent to its historically representative population (DeMott, Introduction xxii; Stein 203).

That its literary classification was tied to the political debate of the time was no mere coincidence. As Cowley asserted, "there has never been a period when literary events followed so closely on the flying coattails of social events" ("A Farewell" 20). And when TGOW was published, its most powerful political response was due to a unique collection of coincidences in the realms of the national and California events as well.

The first half of the decade had been marked by the greatest farm labor upheavals perhaps ever known in California's history. These communist-led movements had already forced the governmental bodies towards the formulation of more effective farm labor policies and actions (Daniel 258-285; Majka and Majka 102-121). And when President F. Roosevelt went on a nationwide radio program in 1940 to state, "I have read a book recently, it is called 'Grapes of Wrath.' . . . I would like to see the Columbia Basin devoted to the care of the 500,000 people represented in 'Grapes of Wrath'," the "immediate pivotal event" in the government realms of action had already been given (qtd. in Stein 209). Internal conflicts had gained force with California's Governor Culbert Olson's democratic pro-labor stance. And as Carey McWilliams,

who, in 1939, coincidentally published his historical analysis of the facts underlying Steinbeck's fiction--Factories in the Fields--was given the head of the state's Division of Immigration and Housing, conflicts were rendered even more intense (Majka and Majka 19).

However, and perhaps more important, external support through public sympathy and pressure gained a force as had never before. "Art metamorphoses reality and this metamorphosis returns to reality" (Lefebvre 83). Articles and studies of the farm-laborers' plight that existed ever since the Wobblies were liquidated in 1917 "had not conveyed any feeling" or, at least, not to the extent that this one novel did (Stein 201). Stein declared: "Like The Jungle [Of Upton Sinclair] twenty-five years before, [TGOW], lodged a severe social problem in the stomachs, not the minds, of Americans (201). "TGOW itself became an important event in the history of California's migrant problem" (203).

But the fact that people increasingly bought, read, and reacted to TGOW throughout the nation and the world came to prove that this novel told more than the mere story of the Dust Bowl refugees and of their reception in the Californian fields (DeMott, Introduction xxii). If its message was not "universal," it certainly touched certain matters which extended in both temporal and geographical spheres.

As the 12 members of the Joad family--"heartland Americans from the Central Plains"--leave their 40 acre farm to move west, they reenact the agrarian/Biblical ideal which forged dominant American identity (Stein xi). They reenact "the settlement of America . . . as a process of ever westward expansion in search of that Eden which seemed to recede always before the eyes of the colonists" (Owens, TGOW 47). As Levant defined, TGOW is "an attempted prose epic, a summation of a national experience at a given time" (93).

What Wyatt depicted as a recurrent mythological literary pattern in California, in the 1930s, became the pattern of the nation. The stories of the California writers were those of heroes that carrying a promise of encountering Eden came to the recognition that they had fallen out of Eden. And as with these writers, "the challenge became . . . to find the gain in the loss, the 'recompense'" (The Fall 207). Thus, the Joad's migration allegorically functioned as the journey that millions of Americans realized in the 30s as they strived to find meanings and values in a world which, all of a sudden, seemed to negate all.

Nevertheless, as we have seen, this modernist theme had already been explored in IDB and OMAM, as both Mac and George paradoxically emerged from such seemingly naturalistic,

"urban" existences. Of all characters of both novels, it was Mac and George who survived the ending of the narratives. And as they stood in the end, they rendered new possible beginnings, for as Mac explicitly stated, and George exercised, it was in one's dynamic and ambiguous relation to nature--which included men as well--that one could possibly come to redefine and to find new values which immediately promised new destinies towards one's self and one's world.

However, at the same time we were left with a guaranteed prerogative of a more organically conscious and articulated development, we were also left with a situation of extreme violence. How George, Slim, Mac, London, and the mass of the workers would come to resist the attacks they daily suffered without losing their sense of a humanity and of further developing it, remained unclear. If the migrant men had no need of attacking, they most certainly had to be prepared for their defense. They were thus all left perpetually at stake for themselves as their possibility of self-creation was daily accompanied by the risk of self-destruction: as Doc Burton stated, one "can only build a violent thing with violence" (IDB 262).

Steinbeck greatly stressed the dangers of fury involved in the means of counteraction. Both the "big guy" of IDB and Lennie of OMAM had urges that, when incited, become extremely dangerous. As the writer then expressed, the development of fury ultimately destroyed psycho-social wholeness; therefore, the possibilities of responsible--human--counteraction. Nevertheless, Steinbeck's characters are left in situations of extreme violence. They are, thus, left without a clear sense of direction as to strike back, as to ultimately make the new situations in accordance to their own newly defined purposes.

Lisca, when analyzing TGOW, rebutted certain critical statements of the 30s--as of the agro-industrialists--stating that Steinbeck's intention was not "to urge organized revolt" (The Wide 153). And as to prove his assertion, Lisca quoted from the journalistic articles that Steinbeck wrote immediately after the production of OMAM: "The Harvest Gypsies," "Starvation Under the Orange Trees," and "Dubious Battle in California" (153). And, truly, as Steinbeck made explicit in "The Harvest Gypsies," which appeared in October of 1936 (and reappeared in 1938 together with "Starvation Under the Orange Trees" as an epilogue of "Their Blood is Strong"), the problem was that if the large-scale growers were to continue with their fascist methods of labor control, "the peace of the state" could be put under "criminal endangerment," for

> A man herded about, . . . forced to live in filth loses his dignity; that is, he loses his valid position in regard to society, and consequently his whole ethics toward society. Nothing is a better example of this than the prison, where the men are

> reduced to no dignity and where crimes and infractions of rule are constant.
>
> We regard this destruction of dignity, then, as one of the most regrettable results of the migrant's life, since it does reduce his responsibility and does make him a sullen outcast who will strike at our government in any way that occurs to him. ("Their Blood" 69-70)

The criminal syndicalism laws, as Steinbeck proposed, had not to be destroyed, but necessarily to be used against the "more deadly fascistic groups which preach and act the overthrow of our form of government by force of arms" (86).

Yes, Steinbeck was then a liberal who directly expressed his class interests in his journalistic works. Steinbeck's news articles were written to the middle-class(es) and in a middle-class perspective. Nonetheless, if Steinbeck clearly stated his political-ideological viewpoints in his "investigative, advocacy reporting," he clearly and deliberately avoided doing so in his novels (Benson,"The Background to TGOW" 62). And as he realistically rendered a world, where the characters voiced their own struggles with their values and meanings, he most certainly struggled with those of his own. For immediately after writing both novels as a detached observer of the phalanx, Steinbeck engaged in direct, "attached" observation and practice, in observations and practices of the most "dubious" kinds.

Within the five trips he made to the Central Valley of California, before going on to the production of TGOW, his contacts and activities were quite diverse (56). If radicals, such as Lincoln Steffens and George West, gave the initial impulse to Steinbeck's incursions in the fields and in journalism, the liberal manager of the Farm Security program of model camps of the Southern San Joaquim Valley--"[the] Tom [Collins] who lived [TGOW]"--gave fundamental informational and "emotional" contributions to the making of his epic novel (60; The True 296).

Steinbeck was torn between what his nonteleological, "scientific" view and novelistic productions provided and what his inherited unconscious cultural inventory led to. At the same time this man went into the fields and debated with government officials, he too debated with communist friends and rural and artistic militants. After having made two visits to the rural fields of California, he visited the Soviet Union, and on his way back, as he and his wife arrived in Chicago, "they bought a car and then drove back to California, following the migrants' route along through Oklahoma and then through the Central Valley" (Benson, The True 64).

His first trip and contact with Tom Collins had led to the production of the three above mentioned journalistic articles. And the following four incursions to various cites of labor struggle

led not merely and finally to TGOW but to three other attempts of fictional production as well as to other journalistic and political articles of the most diverse kinds. "The Great Pig Sticking," "The Oklahomans," and "L'Affaire Lettuceberg" constitute the three known attempts of fictional expression of the conflicts he came to deeply experience and to share with the rural migrant men of the second half of the 1930s, and which were either dubiously disclosed through passionate satirical allegories or through "the dispassionate tone of [a] narrative voice" (348-378; DeMott, Introduction xxxvii).

The ""vicious" 70,000-word anti-vigilante . . . "L'Affaire Lettuceberg,"" constituted his final endeavor before going on to TGOW (DeMott, Commentary 03). Although he finished this book, he destroyed it: it was too "mean" and "nasty." However, "if [he] could make it nastier [he] would" (J.S./E.O. 05/02/38, in Steinbeck, A Life 163). As his earlier novels had rendered, Steinbeck found that fury made "critical insight" difficult. But it was, as he qualified, a most necessary process through which he had to get the "poison" . . . "out of [his] system" (J.S./A.L.W. 05/?/38, qtd. in DeMott, Introduction xxxix).

However, as Steinbeck's fury left him, his anger persisted, and "his critical insight returned" (xxxix). On the last day of May 1938, Steinbeck gave his diary on the production of TGOW its first entry. He wrote: "just now work goes well" (Working 20). So well went his work that, in the first pages of this novel, Steinbeck celebrated the emotion he had previously feared so greatly. TGOW of 1938 responds to the last question he had posed in "Starvation Under the Orange Trees" of 1936:

> Is it possible that this state is so stupid, so vicious and so greedy that it cannot feed and clothe the men and women who help to make it the richest area in the world? Must the hunger become anger and the anger fury before anything will be done? ("Their Blood" 92)

In 1938, Steinbeck responded: Yes, it is possible. Not only is it possible but, to this system, it is necessary. Yes, he responded: hunger must become anger, and if necessary, anger must become fury.

In fact, anger, fury, and passion are key elements towards the understanding of what exactly led Steinbeck to make such a converging shift of values and meanings and of how he expressed these in his fiction. Although they are certainly difficult to measure and prove, we must infer and infer on top of the writer's surviving records that, until today, express and celebrate with such power these same emotions. Steinbeck then sensed and wanted the readers

to sense the weight and force of dominating society and of what he believed was a new emerging society: "In the souls of the people the grapes of wrath are filling and growing heavy, growing heavy for the vintage" (TGOW 449).

What exactly the new harvest would lead to, this author does not make very clear. But one is sure, through various instances, that under the apparent solid surface of these grapes lies a potential and radically opponent liquid matter, that as Berman quotes Marx, "only need[s] expansion to rend into fragments continents of hard rock" (19).

As Steinbeck developed, this "liquid matter" was flowing within

> the Western States [which] are nervous under the beginning change. Need is the stimulus to concept, concept to action. A half-million people moving over the country; a million more restive, ready to move; ten million more feeling the first nervousness. (195)

TGOW most certainly contributed to the fomentation of these feelings among millions of more people, for as Steinbeck had then come to acknowledge, the then taste of the vintage--of the wine--had "no grape flavor at all, just sulphur and tannic acid and alcohol" (448). He, however, fought for the expression of this new under- and overflowing potential which he had come to perceive through the shared feelings and thoughts of anger, fury, and (com)passion. He not merely wanted but thought necessary that others come to share the thoughts and feelings derived from the overpowering weight of anger so that in the end, from the "grapes of wrath," a new wine with the smell of nature itself would flow in the valleys--a wine of a socialist based organization.

So great was his desire that Steinbeck broke away from his previous non-teleological form to clearly interpose between the reader and the novel. Differently from IDB and OMAM, the layers of meaning are now not merely rendered through structure and other indirect means but through direct statement as well. Together with the Joads' plot, Steinbeck fuses that which he denominated the "inter-chapters" or the "general chapters" as in opposition to the "particular" (e.g. Working 22, 23).

TGOW is composed of 16 general chapters and 14 particular--Joad--narratives. It begins with a general chapter to end with a particular. The former are usually intercalated with the later. However, the pattern is broken midway in the novel when four general chapters straddle chapter 13 (a particular chapter), thus, forming a musical pattern.

These general chapters have various functions which, as Lisca noted, may be variously

denominated as well: "scenic," as they provide the reader with various pieces of background information that amplify the specific, immediate realities to which the Joads relate; "collage," as they "explore . . . the nature of that new, nomadic society which the Joads are helping to form;" and "historical," as three chapters deal with the history of the agricultural system of the nation and of California, thus, enabling the reader to establish quite interesting links between the facts and the fiction of Steinbeck's creation (The Wide 155-156).

This novel, differently from IDB, was not written in disorder but as "an intuited whole" where Steinbeck followed a preconceived pattern of form and content (DeMott, Commentary 12). He knew beforehand what, how, and why he wanted to write. He had discovered his own deeply based alignments. He had become conscious of them and had decided to "change[] . . . shift[] . . . [and] amend them" (Williams, "The Writer" 86). During this novel's composition, differently from his previous experiences, Steinbeck declared: "I am completely partisan" (Steinbeck, Working 152). He had become partisan, and his art would become his weapon.

The Joads have lost their land and move on towards the hope not merely of retrieving their land but of achieving a land far more blessed than the one they left behind. But as they reenact the historical pattern of the agrarian, Biblical ideal, they also reenact its confrontation with reality. The Joads have been "dusted and tractored out" of their lands, they have been expelled by the impersonal forces of nature and of technology. And as they move westward, hoping to there escape "the monster" they left behind, they come to face a far more developed, powerful, and deadly one than ever imagined (TGOW 12, 43).

Caught in the perplexity of a situation in which all boundaries have ceased to exist, some men move back to the original place they had left. In the first encounter with a man who is making the counter-journey, the Joads learn that he's "goin' back to starve. [He] ruther starve all over at oncet" than stay in California (243). And as in the second encounter on the very border of the golden state, a man with his boy, again, tells he's going back, for "at leas' we can starve to death with folks we know. Won't have a bunch of fellas that hates us to starve with" (263).

That which these two men and the little boy are most certainly to face, they themselves voiced: death. In IDB, Jim Nolan had wanted to escape the vicious, beaten anger to embrace a cause and an activity that would give "meaning" to his life, but he too ultimately found death (IDB 24). But if his error lied in the tentative escape from his sentiments, it too lied within the fact

that, as he himself voiced immediately before his death: he "never had time to look at things" (IDB 339). Jim had never had the time nor the opportunity to escape his alienation.

TGOW, again, tentatively explores the matter of man's half-articulation, of his alienation. Like the previous novels, it too explores the defiance of the phalanx nature and the possibilities of its transcendence. However, this one book goes deeper into its analysis as it explicitly embraces the depiction of historical causes and of necessary changes.

As Railton has stated, "TGOW is a novel about an old system dying, and a new one beginning to take root" (27). That an old system is dying the reader perceives in the very first pages: "all that [has been] solid [in the lives of thousands of farmers of the Central Plains is] melt[ing] into air" (Marx, Manifesto 12). Their land--their own identity--has transformed into dust: "Every moving thing lifted the dust into the air . . . The dust was long in settling back again" (TGOW 04). From May to June the farming families watch and become restless as the corn they have planted dries and dies, as the earth they have cultivated pales and crusts and is lifted by the strong wind storms that sweep the area.

The farmers, who have made a life out of the land, who have objectified themselves with the appropriation of the land and of the products of their laboring on the land, are now "silent and they do not move much" (48, 06). They cannot move, for the land is moving, breaking boundaries, moving beyond the houses and fences. And as the farmers watch their land lift from the ground, they also watch their own identities--their own beings--desolidify.

Nature has acted against them, against their life-activity. Having nothing to labor, they sit and watch and keep "their hands busy with sticks and little rocks" (07). But if they have lost their defining activities, their wives have not (06). As the women keep on nurturing the family, life goes on. But it only does so "as long as something else remain[s]." What must remain is the "hard[ness]," the "ang[er]," and the "resistan[ce]," for, as the women know, only anger will maintain their psycho-social wholeness. Only anger will warrantee their endurance among the perplexities in which all that was solid has now gone (06).

Chapter 5--the third general chapter--is especially effective in amplifying the first, for it captures historical determination in its fullest sense. Not only are the limits which are set to the farmers clearly presented, but the pressures which the farmers exert on the imposing limits as well. These are pressures exerted by the fury and anger of the men, anger of what they are forced to face, anger of what they understand, and of what they cannot understand. The final

conversation between a nameless farmer and a tractor driver that has come to prepare the land for the vast cotton plantations of the banks and of the large-scale growers, and that (for a couple of extra dollars) has come to drive the "squatters" out, is especially poignant.

The farmer cannot understand how "Davis's boy"--the tractor driver--has gone "against [his] own people" (47). But the tractor driver responds that the defining boundaries of land have ceased to exist, and once so, the farmers must turn to the more permanent boundaries of their individual family units and adapt to the impositions of the new "times." And as he tells the ex-farmer--now squatter--the best he can do is to recognize that the world is no longer for "little guys like [them]" (48). He tells the farmer that the city and the country have fused, that they have lost their distinction, their opposition. The tenant men had earlier stated: "We got to get off. A tractor and a superintendent. Like factories" (44).

But all senses are theoreticians (Marx, EPM 107). And although this squatter may not know the notations of objectification and of appropriation, he does know their meanings as he expresses a resistance to leave not merely what is his but what is his own defining self--he is the land. He is angry. Because he is angry for what he knows, he counter-attacks and threatens to shoot all who "aim to starve [him] to death (TGOW 49).

However, although he may know his own defining self, he cannot identify his ultimate aggressor, for the more he questions, the more impersonal, abstract the imposing limits to his life become. If it is not the tractor driver, it is the superintendent, the bank, its president, the "East", the property itself. Although he may have known objectification, he is yet to know further alienation. And although he may not have found the answers to his questions, he undoubtedly comes to a significant pre-emergent response: "I got to figure," . . . "we all got to figure. There's some way to stop this. It's not like lightning or earthquakes. We've got a bad thing made by men, and by God that's something we can change" (50).

Notwithstanding, the writer supplies more answers to the readers than those immediately available to the ex-farmers themselves. He shows that the system that is dying is the agricultural system that gave basis and sustenance to the agrarian myth, to the ideal of "the yeoman, who owned a small farm and worked it with his family," to the ideal of these migrant men as they strive desperately to redirect their lives (Hofstadter 24). As Hedrick points out, "In TGOW, Steinbeck aims all of his artillery at this myth in order to blast it out of the American imagination and replace it with a more political understanding" (135). And as Steinbeck "blasts" the agrarian myth, he

albeit unintentionally, "blasts" the urban myth as well. Agrarianism and urbanism explode within and throughout the thirty chapters of the novel.

Steinbeck foresaw a drastic change taking place as agribusiness and high-input farming, so common in the Californian fields, was taking hold of the entire nation. While producing "L'Affaire Lettuceberg," Steinbeck had been outraged with those he believed to be the "the greedy bastards who are responsible for this" (J.S./E.O. 03/07/38, Steinbeck, A Life 161).

> But he had gotten beyond his first reaction to the plight of the migrants by deepening his insight into the causes of their exploitation. . . . The source of the economic injustices that drought and Depression magnified so drastically is in the values that the Joads themselves initially share with their oppressors in California. (Railton 30; emphasis added)

The small farmers of the Central Plains are undoubtedly presented as a historically oppressed phalanx. Notwithstanding, as an oppressed rural/social group, they share many of the hegemonic cultural practices and beliefs of those who they perceive as their Eastern/urban oppressors.

And as Tom Joad later becomes aware, the same process which is destroying the farmers is destroying all small-scale producers, whether rural or urban. On the road, as the Joads stop at a little gas station, Tom gets upset with the initial haughty, suspicious attitude of the owner, but he soon perceives that the owner is no different from them: "Pretty soon you'll be on the road yourse'f. And it ain't tractors'll put you there. It's them pretty yella stations in town. . . . An' you'll be movin, mister" (164). The "monster" was everywhere. And if the "monster" of the East had moved into the Central Plains and had superseded the Joads in the occupation of the golden west, the "monster" had been men quite like the Joads that had taken the journey before them. The "monster" lay in them.

The major defining characteristics of the sociological concept of "urbanism" are present within the lives and minds of the rural/agrarian men. The antagonists to the rural men are not solely the large-scale growers and the bankers. As the novel moves on, the conversation between the tractor driver and the furious farmer gains force and some answers. As the tractor driver posed, "Maybe like you said the property's doing it" (49). But in chapter 14 (the eighth general chapter), Steinbeck returns to the farmer's reply. It is not property in itself, but that which has led man to create property and which emanates from man's relation to property itself: "the quality of owning [which] freezes you forever into "I," and cuts you off forever from the

"we" (194; emphasis added). It is "the quality of owning" which alienates man from other men and from nature.

Differently from the school of Chicago, Steinbeck does not present the division of labor and of property as naturally given qualities but as historical, human creations. They are the very founding elements of man's historical hegemonic social self, and accordingly, in total opposition to that which Steinbeck perceived as man's natural/species self. Conder stated:

> The novel's vision depends upon Steinbeck's fuller conception of an individual's two selves. One is his social self, definable by the role he plays in society and by the attitudes he has imbibed from its major institutions. The other is what is best called his species self. It contains all the biological mechanisms--his need for sexual expression, for example--that link him to other creatures in nature. (132)

"It's a free country," an interstate migrant declares. "Well, try to get some freedom to do," responds the other, ". . . you're jus'as free as you got jack to pay for it" (TGOW 154). As Steinbeck clearly illustrated, man's historical social self had been constructed on top of what one owned, of one's instrumentality to the dominant system. And although the farmers differed from the bankers and large growers, their defining social selves were essentially no different. They too were alienated.

The small farmers had undoubtedly led relatively creative, independent lives as they, for years, had directly labored the land and embraced the whole of the agricultural productive process. And chapter 5 perhaps explores best of all the contrast between creative/appropriative and non-creative/alienating labor as the description of the relation with labor and with the means of labor of the "owner men" and of the tractor driver stands in striking opposition to that described by the farmers themselves.

The small farmers of the Central Plains undoubtedly differed from the large-scale growers that robbed their lands and their labor. And at the exact moment in which the ex-farming family of the Joads reach California and are about to confront their large-scale oppressors, Steinbeck devotes a whole chapter--chapter 19--to the historical analysis of both groups. And as he clearly depicts, if their historical development was different, their origin was the same.

The earlier generations of both groups had conquered and transformed their lands as they opposed the native tribes, plants, and animals. "They were hungry, and they were fierce" (300). And as the earlier settlers of the Central Plains fought Indians, the Californians fought Mexicans (297). They were fierce men, who, from the start, posed themselves as isolated

individuals, individuals who had opposed and conquered both natural and social forces and who saw these as constant and opponents.

But from squatters, California farmers were early transformed into owners; from owners, they were transformed into industrialists. While the later generations of California's industrialists inherited farming papers and "batteries of bookkeepers . . . , chemists . . . [and] straw bosses," the generations of the Central Plains inherited small acreages and large debts (299-300). They, thus, inherited the hunger and fury which the Californians had long lost (300). And to these hungry men with such glorious pasts, as they faced the Dust Bowl and the invading tractors, they were but further isolated and, once again, faced up against both nature and society.

They were faced up against both natural and unnatural forces, forces, which lied not merely outside of them but in them. "Can't we just hang on? . . . God knows how much cotton will bring. Don't they make explosives out of cotton? And uniforms? Get enough wars and cotton'll hit the ceiling" (42). The farmers, pleading against unnatural, self-interested social forces, make use of unnatural, self-interested pledges so that they may "hang on." But as Tom Joad tells Casy, for a long time, they have been hanging on: as Grampa--"William James"--Joad always said, the land had only been "good the first five plowin's, while the wild grass was still in her" (35; emphasis added).

Grampa "William James Joad," quite like the philosopher whose name this character shares, knew that nature had its "own dramatic temperament" (TGOW 182; James 215). However, the small ex-farmers' "truth"--their agricultural practices--had ultimately been dysfunctional and uninstrumental to them alone. The same "truth" had not led them alone to "beneficial interactions" (James 217).

Although both oppressed and oppressors acted against nature, only one group effectively achieved social success. But Steinbeck went further. He also questioned how far they had succeeded and for how long they were to succeed. And to do so he resorted to the analysis of the "dramatic temperament of nature" itself. He thus intercalated the first and third general chapters with one on nature alone where, through symbolic means, "Steinbeck identifie[d] his vision of human history with organic, biological processes" (Railton 27).

Chapter 3--the second general chapter--begins describing the dying plants that edge the "concrete highway." They are "tangled, broken, dry." They are all dying. But before they die, they release their seeds:

> sleeping life waiting to be spread and dispersed, every seed armed with an appliance of dispersal, . . . and all waiting for animals and for the wind, . . . ali passive but armed with appliances of activity, still, but each possessed of the anlage of movement. (19)

Out of a dead plant, arises a new potential life. But for this "sleeping life" to awake, it depends on other elements of nature--the wind and the animals--to loosen it, to disperse it, to lie it on fertile ground. Thus, Steinbeck's biological vision "seems to confirm the copresence of the one and the many" (Conder 130). And for Steinbeck, nature alone does not oppose man.

It is man's historical social self which had opposed and daily opposes his species self--his immediate linkage to nature. And to further the contrast, immediately after the quoted reference, Steinbeck describes an animal--a turtle--which acts in perfect accordance to the dynamics of life. A turtle which, in the next particular chapter, Tom Joad--released from prison and on his way home--takes as a present to his little sister and brother--Ruthie and Winfield.

The turtle--the tortoise--as Astro noted, is the "colloquial Latin" for phalanx (J.S. 63). And the phalanx, as we have seen, is the name Steinbeck adopted for social groups as the turtle's shell resembles the military formation of the Roman warriors in battle, as, side by side, each one carries his shield above his head (63). Hence, if the writer had emphasized man's separation from the whole of nature, with the symbolic use of the turtle, he then returned man to the dynamics of the whole.

For Lisca and many others, the turtle's drive to move on represents the "indomitable life force:" the fierce, natural species being of man, his biological determination to move on despite all adversities. Like the turtle, the Joads and their representative phalanx learn to bear far more than the rich. Through a "natural selection process," the poor learn to endure far greater sufferings and to bear on alternative resources of survival. Accordingly, communal action is an important example of the latter (The Wide 158-159).

As Railton asserts, Steinbeck "assumes the role of a Darwin prophet reading the political future instead of the natural past" (28). Notwithstanding, as this same critic noted, although Steinbeck does use the symbolic parallel, "he knew better . . . " (28). In a carefully orchestrated structural break, in the eighth general chapter, Steinbeck speaks of "Manself:"

> Man, unlike any other thing organic or inorganic in the universe, grows beyond his work, walks up the stairs of his concepts, emerges ahead of his accomplishments. . . . Having stepped forward, he may slip back, but only half a step, never the full step back. (192-193)

If man's natural/animal biological determinism is his will to live--to survive--we must not neglect that his human determinism--if we may call it so--is his will to "suffer and die for a concept, for this one quality is man, distinctive in the universe" (193). Man, of all animals, is free to produce from physical/biological needs, free to (re)code and to (re)elaborate even his most elementary natural needs. Man is free to (re)define life itself. Because he is free, he may be willing to die when what he has defined as life no longer exists for him.

Not all of the Joads nor all of the migrants indomitably move southwest on. Not all indomitably struggle to survive; not all struggle for the same ends nor through the same means. Many stay, many move back, and many seek different ways. Muley Graves and Grampa Joad, for example, refuse to leave their native homeland. For them, as for so many others, life is land, and the loss of land is death itself. Granma follows Grampa, calling and fighting with the ghost in a delirium. For her, life is her nuclear family, and the loss of the patriarch is death as well.

Casy had earlier asserted: "fella gets use' to a place, it's hard to go," . . . "Fella gets use' to a way a thinkin' it's hard to leave" (65). Noah and Connie are not attached to "a place" nor to a thing but to "a way of thinkin." And having no specific material markers for the definition of their selves, they turn to alternative resources which promise more to their "way a thinkin'"--to better conditions of individual survival. That of all the Joad members, these two characters alone should conform to the "Darwinian profe[cy]" further illustrates the matter here discussed: Noah and Connie are the least human, most alienated of all.

It is not a simple matter of biological determinism to survive nor to survive through the unity of the species group. Those who decide to separate from their families to seek independent lives of different kinds suffer different fates. And those who decide not to "bust up" their "famblies" and to amplify the scope of the social group--as in the case of the surviving Joads--also suffer fates of different kinds, though materially less promising than, for example, the "urban" one chosen by Connie. As Pressman noted, although collectivism is stressed, "the tendency toward unity is constantly undercut" ("Them's Horses" 73).

It is in the Joad's plot development that the complex and conflictive relation between man's social self and his species self is further and best developed. On the road, the Wilsons, who come to establish "almost a kin bond" with the Joads, are forced to separate from the larger group as "Sairy's" health worsens and does not allow her to move on (TGOW 215, 280). The Wilson's themselves had been forced to separate from Ivy's brother who tragically lost the car

he had just bought before even leaving Kansas (187). Once in California, at the Hooverville camp, the first man the Joads meet--"the Mayor" is "Bull-simple"/"cop-happy" (313-314, 357). "The Mayor" had opposed and resisted far too much and for far too long. As the Hooverville camp is burned down by vigilante action, "the Mayor" and his family do not even move out: they have even lost the energy to pack (357). And as with "the Mayor's" family, the Joads suffer the same possible danger of losing all hardness, all anger, all resistance. After Ma first confronts the epithet of an "Okie" by the border police, she tells Tom her worries:

> "Family's fallin apart," . . . "I don't know. Seems like I can't think no more. . . . There's too much." . . . "I pray God we gonna be let to wash some clothes. We ain't never been dirty like this. Don't even wash potatoes 'fore we boil 'em. I wonder why? Seems like the heart's took out of us." (279)

Ambiguities run throughout the whole of the particular chapters which undercut both the instinctive and the collective drive. The symbolic representation of the turtle, of the migrants' phalanx and of their "indomitable life force" (as it survives a truck driver's murderous attempt and later crushes a red ant which attacks it), does not cohere with the various narrative instances. And as the novel ends with a particular Joad chapter, these characters themselves are left materially worse than ever. They have suffered many losses within the family and are left simply with their clothes on their backs, and even these are soaking wet with the rain which has destroyed their shelter.

Nonetheless, as Lisca had noted, the developments of the characters and of their fates are all intrinsically bound to their social contexts. And according to Lisca, it was precisely the social forces--the social determinations--the writer wished to stress (The Wide 168). Lisca failed to see, however, that it was also these same determinations, which forced the Joads and the representative migrants to move on, and not an instinctive drive like the one that makes the turtle indomitably go on. As Wyatt put it,

> The travel-readiness of the vegetable and animal worlds is met, however, by a reluctance to move in the human one ("They're just goddamn sick of goin'"), and the motion into which the Joads are propelled may be less a behavior affirmed than a condition to which they must adapt. (The Fall 147)

The turtle, as we have seen, is symbolically presented as the major thematic phalanx; however, it is also presented as different from this representative phalanx, once it is of a different animal species. The migrants are human. What seems such an obvious observation, however, demands our attention: the writer clearly emphasizes both aspects of the turtle's symbolic

dualism. Just as it represents the human phalanx--as it involuntarily picks up a seed--the moment it is to cross the highway, it is immediately confronted by two drivers, by two individuals of the species-phalanx it supposedly represents. One driver, in a sedan, swings off the highway to avoid killing it; the other, driving a truck, "swerve[s] to hit it" but merely manages to roll it off the road (21).

The turtle, in itself, symbolically represents man's species life--his linkage to the whole of nature--and what it confronts on the highway is, precisely, man's social self. The turtle, thus, confronts the very self which has historically alienated/estranged itself from the other part. It confronts the self of individualistic, atomistic, predatory--"urban"--intentions, and actions. And the turtle--the species self--which acts by instinct alone, survives by mere chance.

"Manself" is composed of both species and social self. And "manself," . . . "distinctive in the universe," as the writer emphasized, "emerges ahead of his accomplishments" (193, 192). "Manself" is so unique, that he alone has a social self. Because of his social self, however, and differently from the turtle--as mere species being--he may estrange himself from nature and from its "dramatic temperament." He may establish a world of boundaries and of formal opposition, whereas nature, alone, knows no such things. He may thus establish a seemingly "naturalistic" world where all is but arbitrary. And once so, he may transform men into mere animals, or, as Marx stated, he may transform men below the animal level, as even nature--man's inorganic body--is taken away from them (EPM 76). This difference is emphasized by Steinbeck in a conversation between two starving, unemployed workers in the very last inter-chapter: "Fella had a team of horses, had to use 'em to plow an' cultivate an' mow, wouldn' think a turnin' em out to starve when they wasn't workin'. . . Them's horses--we're men (556; emphasis added).

Steinbeck begins the third chapter, which deals with the turtle, describing nature's processes in a manner in which--as Ditsky perceived in many of the writer's productions--"understanding what "is" reveals the fundamental unity of a holistic universe--one in which death itself is finally in the service of life" ("Music" 59). Nature is thus seen an organic interrelated whole of both "benign" and "malignant" forces. Already in chapter 1 the description of nature's actions as rain, sun, plants, insects, men, and animals engage within a struggle for survival indicate that sooner or later the pattern of harmonious regeneration will inevitably be restored. So important is this understanding to the writer, that this harmonious, cooperative but struggling and colliding disposition is again emphasized in the 11th chapter (the 6th inter-chapter) immediately after the

Joads have made all preparations for the migration and are to abandon their households. Not only is this process vividly described but it is vividly contrasted to man's historical relation to the rest of nature. The chapter begins describing the movement of the tractors over the area, as men drive these machines over the land and later put them away and return to their own homes to come back later,

> And this is easy and efficient. So easy that the wonder goes out of the land and the working of it, and with the wonder the deep understanding and the relation. And in the tractor man there grows a contempt that comes only to a stranger who has little understanding and no relation. For nitrates are not the land, nor phosphates; and the length of fiber in the cotton is not the land. Carbon is not the man, nor salt nor water nor calcium. He is all of these, but he is much more, much more; and the land is much more than its analysis. . . . But the machine man, driving a dead tractor on land he does not know and love, understands only chemistry; and he is contemptuous of the land and of himself. . . . his home is not the land. (149)

This man is alienated from his labor, from his self, and from his species being. He lives entirely for himself--for his home--which is not the land. Differently from the other natural elements, he does not produce for the dynamic whole of nature. From species man, he is made into an individual man.

To this alienated labor and life Steinbeck then contrasts the movement taking place after the man leaves. In the five paragraphs which follow, Steinbeck depicts the elements that contribute towards the process of regeneration and of reclamation of the area. The house first suffers the actions of little boys that come to break its windows, of the wind that loosens the boards and the door, of the wind that pries holes. The house begins to disintegrate. The sun and the animals also act upon the house and surrounding area, and the animals act upon themselves. Cats come looking for their owners and, not finding these, reclaim nature as their home and hunting as their labor. As Owens described:

> Man's habitation is inhabited by the animal world; man's domesticated animals return to the wild with impressive ease and, like the migrants themselves, sleep in ditches. The boundary between man and nature seems infinitely permeable, transitory, illusory. (TGOW 79-80)

Steinbeck was not arguing against technology and industrialization, as many critics, beginning with Carpenter and Eisinger, have asserted, but emphasizing how the progressive development of industrial capitalism crushed the ultimate sparks of creativity that had survived within the lives of the small farmers. Later, in the central general chapter--chapter 14--he again returns to the question of the tractor, and straightforwardly addresses the problem:

> Is the tractor bad? Is the power that turns the long furrows wrong? If this tractor were ours it would be good--not mine, but ours. If our tractor turned the long furrows of our land, it would be good. Not my land, but ours. (193; emphasis added)

What Steinbeck emphasizes and argues against is the remaking of boundaries that these machines contribute to within the then context of American capitalism and not the conflict between nature and machine, the country and the city as critics such as Eisinger affirm (147).

Certainly, Steinbeck stresses the differences among the city- and the country-bred people, among their practices and norms of behavior (196-209). But alienation exists in both, for it is the capitalist system which establishes boundaries, breaks them and remakes them anew, boundaries of land, of families, of classes, of areas, and of individuals. And nature and human nature, which know no such boundaries, daily counterclaim and counteract upon this system.

"Manself" has, undoubtedly, thwarted man's species self, but this same suppression "is not rigorously foreordained for every individual [nor for every class]; hence, the novel's determinism does not rest on the universality of its occurrence" (Conder 133). If the truck driver, which deliberately tried to hit the turtle, symbolically represented the alienated being, one cannot state the same about the driver which preceded him. This previous encounter between a social and a species self comes in direct opposition to the truck driver's intentions and actions. The woman driver's intentions and actions formally contradict his.

Through this symbolic rendition, Steinbeck moves away from the class distinctions to emphasize the atomistic, violent response of the masculine/patriarchal order in opposition to the feminine/cooperative response. It is Briffault's theory that again arises within his novels, but this time to assume an immediate and a far more elaborate presence within the making of a counter-hegemonic response to the alienating social pressures. Needless to say, Ma Joad is the living embodiment of this potential towards the possibilities of transcending alienation, as her intense commitment towards family unity and towards the enlargement of this vision proceeds from a strong species self. Nonetheless, many critics focusing on this specific aspect, have, as Hedrick, stated that the author replaced one myth for another (134).

But Steinbeck's depiction of the "know[ing], . . . accept[ing], . . . welcom[ing]. . . , citadel of the family" is not at all limited to ideological structures to begin with (TGOW 95). As Motley recognizes, "Steinbeck works on a mythical level [of the equalitarian, cooperative Matriarchal cultures], not to deny reality but to explain the power and endurance that survive Ma Joad's

hardships" (407).

Furthermore, Steinbeck's idea of the women's live species self arises from the biological core of Briffault's theory. That only some women characters exercise their species self, clearly expresses an awareness of its historical, alienated development (e.g. TGOW 333, 396-397, 411, 439). Thus, what the author emphasizes as the essential foundation of man's species self in which one feels a sense of unity--of connection--with inanimate and animate objects of nature, is not because of a mystical quality of womanhood, but quite the contrary. This live species self has its basis, as Briffault asserted, within the biologically and sexually determined act of childbearing and of suckling, through which a closely inter-connected group and personal identity may evolve. The latter, although independent of the former, is not, however, in opposition to it. The child comes to know itself as an independent being through the relation with the mother and later with other siblings which are accepted as substitutes for the mother's comforting appeasers (64). Thus the "deep-running humanity that charges Ma's relationship with Tom" confirms, within the plot development, the potentials which, as Briffault emphasized, emanate from the mother-child bond and not from the husband-wife bond (Hedrick 140).

The historical explanation for this stronger surviving species sense within the group of farming women is given in the very first chapter, and it is a fundamental aspect for the understanding of the whole of the novel and of the social relations represented within it. It is in one's labor where the possibilities of the expression of one's species self and thus of a more human(e) social self arises. And as the first chapter emphasizes the men have lost their work, whereas the women have not. They have not, precisely, because their work is, as defined by the traditional white patriarchal order, reserved to the private sphere of the family, a sphere which is not immediately affected by the loss of the land. The traditional means of labor of the wife/mother is but her own self. Moreover, the very texture of her work life potentially allows her to perceive the natural flow of life, as she is expected to take care of the most "immediate tasks of daily survival--the awareness and satisfaction of bodily needs . . ." (Hedrick 139).

It is Ma Joad who feeds the family, who washes the dishes, the clothes. It is she who cares for the sick and dying, for those who are either to old or to young to care for themselves. It is she who has, at the very level of her life-activity, the ability to perceive life as an interrelated processual whole where the individuals are all but parts. As pregnant Rose of Sharon is frightened with the sight of her grandmother's dying illness, Ma responds:

> "They's a time of change, an' when that comes dyin' is a piece of all dyin', and bearin' is a piece of all bearin', an' bearin' an dyin' is two pieces of all the same thing. An' then things ain't lonely any more. . . . I wisht I could tell you so you'd know, but I can't." (270)

Ma uses and has learned to use, through the expectations of others--of the historically defined role--all of her senses, and as the women of the opening chapter, she too uses all senses as theoreticians. She knows--perceives--what the family members need as to not give way to despair. And she confronts her man--Pa--when she perceives he is about to break (453).

The initial conversation of chapter 5, between the tractor driver and the expelled farmer, clearly rendered the fundamental values of the traditional white patriarchal farming family. They are the land and the atomistic patriarchal family. But for a man, whose sphere of action is that of the public, land is far more highly praised. The men's labor was on the land itself and the family was but a means of labor on this land.

But for the women who worked within the private sphere of the farming family, their labor was that of maintaining the unity needed for the masculine appropriation of the land. Thus there is a certain dislocation between their defining identities--and it is this dislocation which brings about the conflicts between the two. As the older Joad men give way to the new far more atomistic impositions, Ma confronts them and, in the confrontation, assumes the lead.

Through Ma's development, Steinbeck ponders on the question of social roles, of their deeply based social definitions and of their relations to the biological/ecological core of human definition. As Ma, she has been defined by the role the others expect her to perform, and as she tells Al, she cannot walk ahead of these, as the others do not expect her to do so (159). But as "manself," Ma articulates these socially defined values within her work, and actively struggles with the question of the possibility of their realization. She, thus, emerges ahead of these expectations.

That her work is deeply coded in social terms, however, does not exclude the biological basis. In fact, in her case, her socially defined role of family nurturing ties her closer to this basis, as she alone is expected to attend to the most elementary physical and psychological needs of the family individuals. And thus, as it so appears, it is this close connection to the biological basis of human definition which potentially allows her to daily confront and perceive the determinate limits imposed by the historical variations. And as she clearly states to Tom, these historical determinations are reducing them to mere animals--"wild" animals--where they have "got

nothin' to trust" (503).

Hence, as Ma has come towards the realization that they must finally trust "anybody," this new potential activism must not be relegated as secondary in the face of more recent feminist criticisms on the patriarchal family institutions. Just as she has broken from the socially defined family boundaries to the comprehension of the necessity of more ample definitions, she is now potentially ready to break from the socially defined female roles to the comprehension of the necessity of more ample definitions. She is ready to confront Casy's earlier message that "it's all work," . . . "They's too much of it to split it up to men's or women's work" (138). And as Ma suggests that Rose of Sharon, in the very final scene, give her breast to a starving old man, she confirms her radically new definitions.

As "manself" they are free to (re)define those actions which are coded on a highly imbricated biological/social basis. Rose of Sharon suckles not a child as, one would socially expect, but a strange, old man. And if this action represents the ability to endure oppression, so does it represent the ability to transcend alienation; the natural ability to recognize one's live species-self and the human ability to redefine social codes. And if this is not, in itself, the alleviation of oppression, it is, however, a definite and important pace.

If the distance between female and male roles, in TGOW remains, at the end, in terms of cultural practice, large--as Hedrick and McKay have stressed--we must also consider if this is not so much the failure of the writer, but of the very historical reality he metaphorically represented and, in such a way, which quite profoundly contributes to our "willing suspension of disbelief" (Hedrick 135, McKay 66). Rose of Sharon's gesture represents, if not a new kind of life, certainly, a new kind of approach to life, one which promises hope for the former.

Although family relations are presented as clearly residual, they are also oppositional to the new imposing changes, for those purely social men, who give way to the new changes and impositions, lose the ultimate "sense of that unity which society presumably exists to promote," and which family-farming relations maintained, even if in a mere partial way (Conder 133). If the new social changes further sever the connections among people and between people and the natural elements as embedded in the species-self, commitment towards family union may allow one to resist further alienation. And if the family vision--value--is enlarged to include all families, alienation may be conquered.

It is, ultimately, the boundary of "owning" which "freezes" all, which breaks and remakes

the boundaries anew. If industrial relations enter the fields, they do it from within. The individualist basis of the "agrarian" culture itself--of its values--supports this transformation. As 40 acre owners expand their properties to, say, 40,000, it is because this very culture praised and rewarded these acts. As Railton noted, although the Joads are shocked with the changes set upon them within the ever-changing situations and with the new visions and landscapes, "at no point in the novel do the Joads feel further from "home," . . . (31). As he continues, "Steinbeck also wants us to see how much Hooper's farm in California has in common with the Joad farm in Oklahoma that Tom had been trying to get back to at the beginning" (31).

The most immediate changes occur not in the realms of values but of practices. As industrial relations take over the American fields, the family ceases to function as a major unit of production. It is no longer individual families which are employed and which produce for the larger whole: as industrial capital expands its boundaries, the labor force and the industrial, "urban" relations expand as well. This historical movement is vividly represented in the 19th and the 21st general chapters, as the "new methods" of labor control of agro-industrialists are described and exemplified, and historical facts and dynamics are fused with imagined scenes and encounters.

The family practices of the agrarian culture are thus rendered as necessarily changing. Notwithstanding, they are rendered as individualistic as the practices of those who abandon their single defining families to go off alone. Al's "urban" self-centered, individualistic dream merely differs from Connie's, in the sense that Al's dream later comes to include the development of a patriarchal nuclear family of his own. In the final scene, as Pa demands that Al stay with the remaining members for he alone knows how to drive the truck, Al retorts, "I don't care. Me an' Aggie got to stick together" (559).

Although Al's disregard to his ulterior family is highly "urban", his motivations are not quite so. The inclusion of Aggie within his plans, however small, is representative of a significant change. Ma sensed and rewarded this change as well as those of all others. When Pa had, for the first time, taken a spontaneous action to protect laboring Rose of Sharon from the flood but failed, Ma comforted him: "Don't take no blame. . . . It'll be awright. They's changes--all over" (568).

However small, changes have undoubtedly occurred. Both Uncle John and Rose of Sharon express their new understandings through their very final actions. These two characters,

who had throughout the novel sought for religious explanations for their personal misfortunes, abandon their views based on "sin" and come to an understanding similar to those of both Casy and Jim Rawley--the government camp manager. As Jim Rawley stated to the fanatic Lizbeth Sandry, the "sin" is social: ". . . the sin is bein' hungry. . . . the sin is bein' cold" (398). When Uncle John sends "Rosahorn's" stillborn baby down the river to the town exhorting that it "Go down an' tell 'em. Go down in the street an' rot an' tell 'em that way. . . . Maybe they'll know then," he is but expressing his newer secular view (572). In the same way,

> [Rosahorn's] gesture [of breastfeeding the starving old man] acknowledges the truth of Uncle John's words, that the sin that killed her baby was social and not theological in origin. The same gesture shows her overcoming a solipsism engendered by her pregnancy by enlarging the sympathies of her species self to embrace more than the child that society denied her. That gesture, finally, is the perfect one to signal the awakening of nature's self, the self growing from that human biological nature which mothers and fathers the species. (Conder 139)

However, although significant changes have occurred within each one of the Joad members, "chance alone can save the group or the turtle [of chapter 3] as both walk, . . . one step ahead of the other" (Conder 131). And like Ma, as most characters leave the novel, they are still taking one step at a time, still living the day (TGOW 542).

Steinbeck certainly perceived this problem as he wrote about the historical changes which led thousands of men to the roads and to the fields "ravenous for work, murderous for work" (364). He knew that society needed to be changed by the very people that most demanded these changes. And for this to happen a definite shift in values and meanings was needed. The atomistic oppositional view of individualism and of the patriarchal tradition would have to give way to a holistic processual view of collectivism/socialism. People would have to perceive by themselves the "infinitely permeable, transitory, illusory" boundary between man and nature, between man and man. But he also knew better. Differently from Ma, Steinbeck well knew that it was not a mere matter of their will, but of their possibilities. Although Ma insists stating "It ain't kin we? It's will we?," Steinbeck well knew that it was also a matter of "kin we" (132). But as Ma herself expresses, the most immediate possibilities of imposing one's determinations were given by the very supposing impossibilities. As this character states, "As far as 'kin,' we can't do nothin', not go to California or nothin'; but as far as 'will,' why, we'll do what we will."

For the writer the historical revolutionary moment was given by the mere immediate fact, as Marx had proclaimed, and Berman expressed, "that the aura of holiness [was] suddenly

missing" for 500,000 Americans. They could thus finally confront their social and species self in the then present situation as they were forced to confront the absence of all which had forged their identity (89). When William James Joad is buried, Casy remarks,

> "I wouldn't pray for an o' fella that's dead. He's awright. He got one job to do, but it's all laid out for 'im an' there's on'y one way to do it. But us, we got a job to do, an' they's a thousan' ways, an' we don' know which one to take. An' if I was to pray, it'd be for the folks that don' know which way to turn." (184)

As Steinbeck perceived, Americans finally could find, within the "thousan'" possibilities, their own way. And as he believed, they eventually would.

It was not merely the agricultural system which gave basis to the American myth which was dying, but the underlying capitalist system itself. And because the former movement was occurring, the latter was sure to follow. The seed the symbolic turtle carried was thus the seed of the anger of these 500,000 men. As a seed, it might flower and, as in this case, into the making of a new society--a society which Tom Joad envisioned from the collectively based model of the "Weedpatch" government camp:

> "I've been thinkin' how it was in that gov'ment camp, how our folks took care a theirselves, an' they wasn't no cops wagglin' their guns, but they was better order than them cops ever give. I been a-wonderin' why we can't do that all over. Throw out the cops that ain't our people. All work together for our own thing--all farm our own land." (536)

Tom Joad will follow the path chosen by Jim Casy, who had abandoned preaching in favor of labor organizing, and who had started off determined to discover where the people were going to, and how they could come "to live before they c[ould] afford to die" (67). He thought he could come to "preach" again, but he did not quite know how, and in his last encounter with Tom he tells him that it was in prison that he "really got her" (72, 490).

That Jim Casy found his answer in prison is quite significant, for as in IDB, Jim Nolan too, found his answer to life in prison as well. But in this former novel, the answer was clearly rendered. Jim had made contact with communist jail mates, and through these, he had found the answers to his needs. But as we have seen, Jim's needs were different from those of Casy. Jim was searching for a meaning for his life, whereas Casy was searching for that of the people. Casy's development and adoption of a socialist perspective thus promised far more that than of Jim of IDB. Casy emerged from within the people, and his socialist vision was a product of this emersion. His will was not separate from the general will of the masses he led.

In IDB, Steinbeck had concentrated his attention on what he believed to be the cause of

man's "half-articulation" and the "half-articulated" counter-attacking destructive force of mass fury. If he, however, transcended this perspective to artistically render the possibility of overcoming half-articulated action through praxis, in TGOW he explicitly embraces the necessity of a revolutionary praxis (through anger); artistically, however, he induces doubt on its effective or at least immediate formation.

In IDB, Mac had told Jim that the socialist struggle was one of extreme difficulty, for if one is not killed by the enemy, "if we put it over, our side would kill us" (159). Jim Casy repeats the message to Tom stating, "Anyways you do what you can. An',' . . . 'the only thing you got to look at is that ever' time they's a little step fo'ward, she may slip back a little, but she never slips clear back" (493).

Through Casy last words, Steinbeck, again, voices the difficulties that the revolutionary leaders face as they deal with masses whose alignments are so deeply based on an alien formation that the tentatives to conquer alienation are bound to face immense and violent outcomes. Casy knew that to propose changes to these men was no easy task, for as he voiced in the very beginning of the novel, "Fella can get so he misses the noise of a saw mill" (34). That Casy states this immediately after Tom has told him of a story of a man who had just been released from prison and who deliberately went back to prison to live a better life than the one he had at home, is another important element: as Casy and Tom are to discover, the true prison lies outside the walls of McAlester.

And as Tom had told Al, there is "somepin' screwy about it, somepin screwy about the whole idea a lockin' people up" (228). The prison, as an overemphatic vision of society's historical process of "freez[ing] you forever into "I," and cut[ting] you off forever from the "we," is, as Tom expressed, "jus' a kind a way a drivin' a guy slowly nuts. . . . An' they go nuts, an' you see 'em, an' pretty soon you don't know if you're nuts or not" (194, 228). Society has been designed in such a way as to estrange the spontaneous expression of man's species self and to grant this estrangement as the very "normal" expression of mankind. Hence, as Jim Casy is killed, he echoes the very final words of Christ--"You don't know what you're a'doin'"--to render not a religious but a profound cultural understanding (495).

Capitalist society imprisons man's species self, and those "who exercise[] the natural rights of nature's self [are] only to be imprisoned by the society that resents their exercise" (Conder 135). As this same critic noted, that Casy found his ultimate answer in prison is thus

due to the fact that the prison is precisely "the place of the free," the place where those who exercised their spontaneous species self meet.

At the time of the production of TGOW, Steinbeck committed himself to a socialist perspective. He came to the recognition, as he explicitly asserted, that capitalism was done for. Various critics and biographers--if not the great majority--have negated this transition and have elaborated various studies which relied on his past journalistic recordings to prove the contrary. But not one critic has cited this passage of his interview of 1939, after the novel's publication:

> There is little question in my mind that the principle of private ownership of means of production is not long with us. This is not in terms of what I think is right or wrong or good or bad, but in terms of what is inevitable. The province of the writer is to set down what is and what may come of it with as little confusion and as little nonsense as possible. The human condition like any other life form will tolerate an unhealthful condition for some time and then will either die or overcome the condition either by mutation or by destroying the unhealthful condition. Since there seems little tendency for the human race to become extinct, and since one cannot through biological mutation overcome the necessity for eating, I judge that the final method will be the one chosen. ("Interview" 861; emphasis added)

That Steinbeck did not clearly name the new labor organization through which Casy found his ultimate answers, and through which Tom is to follow his steps is perhaps immediately explainable by the very context in which Steinbeck wrote. As Benson noted, all that Steinbeck did during this period is highly difficult to trace as Steinbeck was aware of the possible (and intended) retaliations of the Associated Farmers (The True 369). And as he explicitly stated to Covici, "The point is this--the fascist crowd will try to sabotage this book because it is revolutionary. They will try to give it the communist angle. However, The Battle Hymn is American and intensely so" (01/01/39, in Steinbeck, A Life 174).

But if the writer thought such a change was possible and necessary, he was also aware of the immense difficulties it faced, especially within the traditional cultural inventories of the American hegemonic mind. Thus, perhaps, the "real" answer lies here. "Reds" are constantly attacked throughout the novel as foreign "troublemakers," "labor faker[s]," which must be "run . . . outa the country" (245, 383, 428, 485). And every time a worker merely questions the conditions imposed on him, he is so indicted.

Notwithstanding, the writer clearly posed that the time had come in which Americans could face the "foreign" realities and find many "familiar" aspects within them and hence perceive the very "familiar" as quite "foreign". Americans "had ignored the destructive aspect of their quest because they competed for land with indians and Mexicans whose humanity they refused to

recognize. But now the frontier had been "closed" (Motley 404). As the author rendered in the 19th chapter of the novel (the 11th "historical" general chapter), they had exploited foreign "slaves, although they did not call them slaves: Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans, Filipinos" (TGOW 298). They had deported these "slaves" whenever they got "funny," but now they could no longer do so.

As Steinbeck stated, "the great owners ignored the three cries of history" (306; emphasis added). The owners ignored the cries of the modernist quests: the cries for liberty, for equality, and for fraternity. They ignored the cries that had come from far off in time and space and that in North America had gained means of expression of their own. As Gold had roughly mapped out, these cries which make up "the democratic idea . . . [were] a world. [A world which] contain[ed], within itself", expressions which went way back to the Greeks, passed through the Romans, through Christianity, the Enlightenment, Puritanism, which were put forward through the ideals of the French and American revolutions, which were given continuation through the labor struggles of the nineteenth century and through socialism (126). Hence, if the owners ignored these cries, they ignored, as Gold affirmed, the very "flesh and bones of modern man--his mental and social heredity" (306).

They thus ignored the possibility of that which Steinbeck foresaw and believed possible and which gained its fullest artistic development in the characterization of Jim Casy. Jim Casy is but the vivid fusion of these past inherited cultural traditions with the new arising needs. And as this character develops, we follow the dramatic development of the possible making of an American socialist praxis. This character's development expresses what the writer perceived as the arising possibility as well as the difficulty posed within the making of a new version of socialism, of American socialism.

When the reader meets Casy, he has already undergone a profound conflict, in which he gave up his sacred beliefs, and is determined to find more solid explanations within the secular realms of life (TGOW 28). Throughout his preaching life, Casy's actions contradicted his intentions. Dissatisfied with the pretence life of a celibate preacher, Casy leaves his position and the community to go off alone into the woods. There he reflects on his past life, and looking back at the whole of it, he achieves an objective/outside view where he concludes that, perhaps, his actions were not sinful, but simply actions all humans do (30). He thus concludes that, perhaps, the religious social self he had preached denied the very animal/species being of man

as expressed in his sexual urges. And, perhaps, the idea of God, of the "Holy Sperit," of Jesus, denied the very nature of the human/social self:

> "I says, 'What's this call, this sperit?' An' I says, 'It's love. I love people so much I'm fit to bust, sometimes.' . . . I figgered, 'Why do we got to hang it on God or Jesus? Maybe,' I figgered, 'maybe it's all men an' all women we love; maybe that's the Holy Sperit--the human sperit--the whole shebang. Maybe all men got one big soul ever'body's a part of.' (30-31)

Critics have identified Jim Casy with the figure of Christ, an identification supported by his very initials J.C.. But they have also identified Casy's reverence to nature and to the "human sperit" with Emersonianism, with the transcendental conception of the "over-soul" (e.g. Carpenter, "The Philosophical" 83). But, as Carpenter himself recognized, if Casy was a new prophet of transcendentalism, he was albeit a prophet of the Emersonian conception of the over-soul united with Whitman's conception of democracy and with the pragmatic, instrumental methodology of William James and John Dewey (87).

From the start, Casy was determined to confront the habits of atomistic responses of frontier individualism as he rebutted both Muley and Tom's plan of shooting at the deputy sheriff's car. He stated: "We got to get thinkin' about doin' stuff that means somepin'" (TGOW 76). But to seek new methods of action, one must understand what has happened and what is happening. And Casy neither effectively comprehended his own actions nor those of the farmers he had led throughout his life (e.g. 52). And as he goes off together with the migrants to learn what has happened to the people and to his own self, he senses that there is an underlying process which has not yet been grasped by the very people but which needs to be grasped if they are ever to give meaning and effective purposes to their own lives. If Casy agrees with Tom that "lay[ing one's] dogs down one at a time" is the best way to act, he also notes that "they's different kinda fences" on one's way (224). Casy senses that there are certain social determinations which are constant and thus can be perceived beforehand, and although he cannot pinpoint them, he is sure of their existence: "There's stuff goin' on that the folks doin' it don't know about--yet" (224).

But as he goes on, determined to discover these "fences," he seeks for both an outside and an inside view of the rural migrants' culture. He ponders on the constant recurrent actions he sees and hears of as well as on the recurrent thoughts and feelings he hears of and senses. Once at the Hooverville camp, Casy tells Tom,

> "Listen all the time. That's why I been thinkin'. Listen to people a-talkin', an' purty soon I hear the way folks are feelin'. . . . I hear em' an' feel 'em; an' they're beating their wings like a bird in a attic. Gonna bust their wings on a dusty winda tryin' ta get out." (321)

It is no mere coincidence that both Ma and Tom are, of all Joad members, the most receptive individuals to Casy's companionship as well as to his "preachings." Ma, as we have seen, daily experiences the practical outcome of the conflicts between the principles, the conducts, and the necessities of the Joad's--between their words and deeds. Tom, as he meets Casy, expresses his innermost conflict of having been imprisoned for the act of killing in self defense. He cannot understand the very meaning of his punishment as he tells Casy, "I'd do what I done--again" (33). Like Casy, who tried to grasp the meaning of the conflict between his religious demands and his spontaneous actions, Tom tries to understand the conflict between the social demands imposed by the law and his spontaneous action of self defense. But, like Ma, Tom initially avoids looking back at his experience to try to understand it, whereas Casy is determined to grasp the underlying mechanisms of what he perceives to be a universal rather than a personal problem.

Casy is determined to look at both the "stars" and the "road" (IDB 117). Whatever he could not learn out in the woods alone, he tries to discover on the road, among the people. Having sought an outside view of his own personal experience, he decides to seek for an inside view of the collective experience (TGOW 73). And as he goes on, he discovers "They's a army of us without no harness" (321). And as he states, religion is certainly not the "harness" they need, for as Tom says, "prayer never brought in no side meat," and as Casy continues "an' God Almighty never raised no wages" (322). However, immediately after this conversation, Casy is taken into prison as he willing gives himself in for an action Tom had committed (340). In jail, Casy discovers the true meaning of their underlying conflicts, as there he then achieves an outside view of the previous collective experience.

Casy certainly gives way to a "transcendental pragmati[c]" approach, and it is due to this approach through which he then discovers the underlying meanings of their conflicts. He thus discovers what to "preach," where to lead the people, and how to "harness" the people. And as he tries to pass his experience on to Tom, he, however, states that maybe he can't; "maybe [Tom] got to find out" (490).

Casy learned the importance of action. He discovered that the dichotomies between the

social demands and the "'got to's" ran deep in their society, and that the socially defined rights went against the many of the very basic needs of the people (179). The will of the people constantly clashed with the will of the religious discourses as well as with the will of the state, with the law. And as the Joads are to illegally bury "Grampa," Casy then emphatically affirms: "Law changes," . . . "but 'got to's' go on. You do what you got to do" (179). Notwithstanding, Casy only effectively learned what had to be done in prison, as he there met with labor organizers who supplied him with an overall theory of action and change.

Casy began to mould a theory through his actions. In prison, he further learned to act as he acquired a theory with an overall meaning. Hence, he learned to act with meaning through the unification of the antithetical transcendental and pragmatic principles. But his finally acquired "transcendental pragmatic" approach is but another way of stating "praxis," and, quite significantly, it is but the American way of translating one of the most fundamental aspects of Marxism. It is the way of reassuring the American reader that socialist values and meanings can arise out of the conflicts of the American hegemony itself. And as Casy exposes to Tom, it is only through unified, collective action that change may occur (490).

Steinbeck knew that the worldwide modernist quest had been modified within the American hegemonic context. That Biblical structure and symbolism are so significantly present within this novel is due to the fact that Steinbeck knew he was writing about a nation whose hegemonic identity was "founded solidly upon a biblical consciousness," and whose counter-hegemonic expression would, therefore, necessarily have to pass through the Biblical vision (Owens, TGOW 46). It would have to pass through the American expressions: Emersonianism, pragmatism, Social Darwinism, Agrarianism, etc..

If the Hooverville and Hooper Ranch experiences served as both contrastive and comparative organizations to that of the Joad's original farmstead in Oklahoma, the Weedpatch experience is mere contrast. The government camp stands as a model of a new kind of social organization, based on cooperative self-government of the people composing it. Steinbeck describes this organization in unusual detail as the Joads there arrive and are received by each one of its composing committees (366-367, 426-444). That this camp organization echoes the spontaneous developments of the migrants' road campsites of chapter 17 is another illuminating factor, for as in both "worlds," the power emanates from the collectivity and both the decisions and the livelihoods of the people are all shared (250).

In the government camp, however, sharing exists at the very levels of the production of the necessities of the people, and responsibilities are taken and care is given by all. However, if the camp's organization proved successful, it also proved to be constantly at odds with the deeply based cultural traditions of its components which, at times, worked against the collective efforts of both camp organization as well as of the possibilities of unionization. In the two chapters devoted to the government camp experience, conflicts abound: in the ladies' committee, among the children, and among the men (405-406, 408, 444)

This cultural difficulty was precisely what Casy referred to as he told Tom a story of a labor organizer who was turned in by the people he had led. And as he told Tom, "Get tar'd sometimes" (493). The alienation of man runs deep, so deep that man, as Steinbeck so emphasized in the last inter-chapter, is not merely reduced to the animal level, but below the animal level. However, even if he is so reduced, he is never totally so, for if "manself" is the one quality which led them to the present alienated position, it also is the one quality that may allow them to resist and to rebel. And as the writer professed, "some day--the armies of bitterness will all walk together, and there'll be a dead terror from it" (113).

The government camp is but a model of the possibilities for a future society which, as Tom Joad envisioned, would include what the camp excluded and would thus allow genuine social sharing: the common ownership of land. Tom had been fascinated with the government camp experience. He, however, could not understand why there were not "more places like [it]," until a friend responded, "I guess the big farmers is scairt . . . Figger maybe if we can gov'n ourselves, maybe we'll do other things" (370, 382).

As Marx who believed that "Poverty is the passive bond which causes the human being to experience the need of the greatest wealth--the <u>other</u> human being," Steinbeck expressed quite the same, as he emphatically repeated, "The great owners, striking at the immediate thing, . . . not knowing these things are results, not causes. Results, not causes; results, not causes. The causes lie <u>deep and simply</u>" (<u>EPM</u> 112; <u>TGOW</u> 192). The migrant workers' union could thus fuel the possibility of overcoming what the <u>simple</u> "quality of owning" had so <u>deeply</u> based in the minds and lives of all modern men: "This is the zygote. For here "I lost my land" is changed; . . . --"We lost <u>our</u> land. . . . This is the beginning--from the "I" to "we"" (194).

But if the hunger for land, for food, for family security, and for growing necessities were but potential weapons for the fermentation of the migrants' angry resistance and rebellion, the

hunger for land was also its potential enemy: "the quality of owning freezes you forever into "I," and cuts you off forever from the "we"."

Steinbeck knew as Swingewood points out, that "revolutionary ideas and practice have meaning only in terms of history, of the past, the present and the future" (266). Thus if "what Tom Joad intends to do is left uncertain," it is not because "action is undermined with inaction, realism with sentimentality" (Pressman, "Them's Horses" 75). It is because what is to be done is to be defined by the very people in action. It is to be defined through praxis. And if the history of the present and its interaction with the past experience of these people carries enormous potentials, it also carries enormous difficulties. As Pa calls upon the men to build the flood trench because his "girl got her pains," one man responds, "It ain't our baby. We kin go" (TGOW 563). And as the collective laboring fails as a tree falls upon the constructed bank, another man moves in to "see that bastard Joad.". . . "If he didn't have that fool idear about the bank, we'd a got out" (568).

Collectivism/socialism is undoubtedly a tough idea, especially for those social selves which have for generations lived estranged from their species selves. Tom and Casy gained political/economical consciousness of their alien formation through active experiences in their own tradition and through the active confrontation with major defining values of their culture. That they have broken from the individualist basis of their culture and know their battle is one which must include this very rupture is expressed in the only form available within their own cultural inventory. When Tom repeats Casy's words, in spite of its religious and Emersonian overtones, he is emitting a profoundly new political and cultural understanding--in the concrete language of his own community. What both Casy and Tom express through religious and transcendental forms is a concept which comes far closer to Marx, than to Emerson or to that exposed in the Bible. Tom remembers Casy's words:

> Says one time he went out into the wilderness to find his own soul, an' he foun' he didn' have no soul that was his'n. Says he foun' he jus' got a little piece of a great big soul. Says a widerness ain't no good, 'cause his little piece of a soul wasn't no good 'less it was with the rest, an' was whole. (535)

In total opposition to the Biblical myth of the origin of man (which also underlies the Emersonian concept of the "over-soul"), Tom Joad adumbrates a very different conception of human interaction and definition. They recognize that the self--the "soul"--does not exist previous to nor above the social relations within one's community--without "the rest." Their message connotes

what Marx stressed: "only in community with others has each individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions; only in community, therefore, is personal freedom possible" (The German Ideology 83).

What Casy saw, and Tom, in his final scene, expresses, is that the migrants have yet to become a class, a potentially hegemonic class in and against the already existing and powerful hegemony based on individualist structures. That this hegemony, however, is based on alienated relations from the species being of man is their ultimate hope, for however obscured and veiled man's relation to nature may be, he has never left nature, neither outside nor inside his own self. And this is ultimate "the zygote:"

> The biological basis sets certain determinate limits to what kinds of changes any given historical variation can impose. Indeed, it is only because human nature has a determinable core of meaning that we can speak of human emancipation at all. Were it not for that core, we would have no markers at all, no criteria for talking of liberation, emancipation, or of a better society. (Anderson, P. 334)

We would have no markers for hope. . . .

Hence, when Casy tells Tom why, with all the historical difficulties, one must persist with the battle, he relies on this very understanding. And that his words echo those of Lenin, in fact, is no mere coincidence. In 1921, Lenin promulgated the New Economic Policies (NEP) for the Soviet State, in which small private enterprises would be granted impulse due to the necessities posed by the enormous economical difficulties the Soviets' were then undergoing. As Lenin proposed these changes, he defined it as "one step back for two steps forward" (qtd. in Lopez 36).

As Casy repeats his jailmate's words, he repeats "the Marxist concept of historical development" (Pressman, "Them's Horses" 79 n. 11): "The on'y thing you got to look at is that ever' time they's a little step fo'ward, she may slip back a little, but she never slips clear back" (493).

"She never slips clear back," for, as in nature itself, despite all death--all droughts and floods--seeds are always shed. But, as in nature, for the seeds to flower, they must be carried on by the interactive and forceful laboring of nature's elements with the whole and within the whole.

Only with and through these movements, out of the floods, can "tiny points of grass c[ome] through the earth" (556). Only through these, will people effectively know that "where a

number of men gather[] . . ., it w[ill be] all right--the break [will] not come; and the break w[ill] never come as long as fear c[an] turn into wrath" (556).

CONCLUSION

4. Contrasts in Contexts

When discussing the tendencies of collectivism and individualism, of socialist and liberal values in TGOW, Pressman affirmed that the contradictions lay "in the novel itself" and "reflect[ed] Steinbeck's own ideological conflicts in dealing with the historical moment, creating for Steinbeck an approach/avoidance situation" ("Them's Horses" 71). According to this critic, although Steinbeck "move[d] towards an activist politics," he himself did not "accept them as truth" (71). In an analysis of IDB, Pressman further asserted that Steinbeck "distorted the reality of the Depression by undercutting the historical effectiveness of the Left," defined as "the government, the workers, [and] the communist party" ("Individualists" 128). As he believed, "the distortions allowed Steinbeck to qualify the image of the Left's effectiveness and thereby reduce the pressure within himself for commitment" (129).

But Pressman's definition of "commitment" is precisely what has caused so much confusion in "Steinbeck criticism." Pressman confuses "commitment" with partisanship and, therefore, finds it difficult to understand how a writer who had active, informal relations with militants of the Communist Party of the U.S. could come to espouse a socialist view of the world but refuse to engage within this or any other representative organization of its kind in the country. That Steinbeck refused to partake in any political organization of the time and expressed many divergences with those communists he had met is a fact. Notwithstanding, this does not invalidate the other fact that, in 1938, Steinbeck committed himself to a socialist view of life as he discovered and expressed the need to alter the "deep and simple" cause of man's alienation: "the quality of owning [which] freezes you forever into "I," and cuts you off forever from the "we"" (TGOW 194).

Steinbeck's commitment to a socialist view of life in 1938 was nothing more than a "conscious, active, open . . . choice of position" (Williams, Marxism 200). It was the active choice of a social/political/ideological position which was already presented in his art even before he became conscious of it. As Steinbeck wrote his first migrant novel in 1934, he was certainly not espousing any socialist political ideology. Quite the contrary. He was not even espousing the

political liberal activism he came to embrace in 1936. But what gave basis to these rather radical changes within such a small period of time was his deeply based "commitment," his commitment to social reality and to its exposition through his art.

So radical were Steinbeck's changes that from 1934 to 1938/39 he moved from an explicitly "neutral"/"scientific" view of art, passing through a more socially directed--if not, engaged--art (as the "play-novelette" form of OMAM expressed), to liberal activism and journalism, and finally to produce TGOW. If in 1935, he had stated that he was not at all interested in "ranting about justice and oppression," the next year he was actively engaged in doing so, calling for immediate civil and federal action to give end to the violence which drastically threatened the "system of agricultural economics" (A Life 98; "Their Blood" 59). And, in 1938, as he was called upon by a non-partisan liberal committee, organized with the intent of giving end to the violence he had feared, he responded that he was no longer interested in ending the strikes. He was no longer interested in suppressing the determinations of the people. And as to leave no doubts, he asserted:

> In fact, the word non-partisan describes one of two kinds of people: 1.--Those who through lack of understanding or interest have not taken a side, and 2, those who use the term to conceal a malevolent partisanship. I am completely partisan. Every effort I can bring to bear is and has been at the call of the common-working people to the end that they may eat what they raise, wear what they weave, use what they produce, and in every way and in completeness share in the works of their hands and heads. And the reverse is also true. I am actively opposed to any man or group who, through financial or political control of means of production and distribution, is able to control and dominate the lives of the workers. I hope this statement is complete enough so that my position is not equivocal. . . . I am not non-partisan. (Steinbeck, Working 152)

But Steinbeck's journey towards a more activist socialist--"partisan"/committed--view of life and of art, quite ironically, if not begins, at least takes a more definite direction precisely when he decided not to take any direction at all, when he adopted Ricketts' scientific notion of non-teleology and decided to apply it to his art. He wanted his art merely to express what "was" and what "was" through a processual holistic understanding of life as exposed by various scientific and philosophical studies of the time.

It was from the reading of these sources and from the observance of the radically opposing mass movements which then took hold of the world, of his country, and of his state that Steinbeck began to uncover the layers of his own alignments. The year of 1933 formally represents a dramatic moment in the making of the highly critical novelist he was to become.

The "Argument," although expressing a rather conservative preoccupation with the destructive powers of social organization and movements, also expressed a view radically opposed to the American hegemonic tradition. The "Argument" held that the individual--the self--was forged within and through the interaction with the group and not otherwise. Man had a double nature: he was both animal and human, both individual and social.

Steinbeck fused past and present materials of such vastness and richness that it is difficult to trace and mention all which contributed to the "establish[ment of] the physical integrity of ["The Argument"]" (J.S./G.A. ?/?/33, in Steinbeck A Life 81). In a letter to Carlton Sheffield of June 30, 1933, he referred to some of his most recent readings, citing names such as Huntington, Spengler, Ouspenski, Jung, Briffault, Allee, Schondringer, Planck, Bohr, Einstein, and Heisenberg (qtd. in Benson, The True 270).

The works of Spengler, Allee, and Einstein were all important influences in the making of the theory of urbanism of the school of Chicago as well (Bulmer 29; Coulon 11-17). Spengler and Allee were constant references in Park's texts. And Allee, who had given the biological basis for the maturation of human ecology as developed by Park, had also been a teacher to Ricketts during the latter's incomplete biology course at the University of Chicago (Astro, J.S. 5).

However, as C. Lewis emphasized, "in his effort to unite the intellectual currents of the times with the social events of his life time, Steinbeck developed an original artistic voice" (v). Steinbeck's originality has been the subject of various studies which concentrated on the depiction of his intellectual influences and fusions. Astro, Benson, Benton, Hedgpeth, Perez, and Weeks have all expanded on the influences accepted and denied in Steinbeck's relationship with the marine biologist, Ricketts. The works of W. C. Allee and of W. E. Ritter have been noted as important inspirations towards the making of Steinbeck's "Argument." And these particular biological sources have led many critics to place Steinbeck in the naturalist tradition.

But Steinbeck's naturalism, if any, is fused with humanism--with modernism. His interest in the discoveries of the biological, ecological sciences were of a sociological, anthropological kind, and his social "scientific" view was from the outset different to that of the Chicago sociologists. Steinbeck wrote: "All life forms from protozoa to antelopes and lions, from crabs to lemmings form and are part of phalanxes, but the phalanx of which the units are men, are more complex, more variable and powerful than any other" (qtd. in Astro, J.S. 65).

Steinbeck's interest in the natural sciences, quite like that of the Chicago sociologists,

was in the discoveries which shed light towards the understanding of human behavior. However, for Steinbeck, what these scientific studies pointed to was that both nature and man, both the individual and the group were in dialectical opposition and unity, in dialectical cooperation and struggle. And if Steinbeck was greatly impressed with the harmonious, cooperative, struggling and colliding disposition of nature, he was also impressed with the anti-harmonious and uncooperative development of human society. In the phalanx theory, he immediately denied all dualisms which ruthlessly set either pole against one another. At the same time, he denied the idea of an on-going unity of nature and human society. Society had historically lived in uncooperative relations with the rest of nature, including its own self. In one particular passage of the later production of The Log (where Steinbeck analyzed the colonies of pelagic tunicates which formed a pattern similar to that of a glove) he clearly rebutted the hegemonic "scientific mythology of the origin of man" (Matta 44). He stated:

> Each member of the colony is an individual animal, but the colony is another individual animal, not at all like the sum of its individuals. . . . Here are two animals, and yet the same thing--something the early Church would have been forced to call a mystery. . . So a man of individualistic reason, if he must ask, "Which is the animal, the colony or the individual?" must abandon his particular kind of reason and say, "Why, it's two animals and they aren't alike any more than the cells of my body are like me. I am much more than the sum of my cells and, for all I know, they are much more than the division of me." There is no quietism in such acceptance, but rather the basis for a far deeper understanding of us and the world. (165)

Thus, with this in mind, it is no mere coincidence that Steinbeck looked towards the Soviet and Nazi movement as "phalanx" models worthy of analysis. As he stated:

> Russia is giving us a nice example of human units who are trying with a curious nostalgia to get away from their individuality and reestablish the group unit the race remembers and wishes. . . . [Whereas Germany has taken] the impulse which has suddenly made [itself] overlook the natures of its individuals. (J.S./C.S. 06/21/33, in Steinbeck, A Life 76-77)

This particular former interest most probably not only led Steinbeck to read The Capital but to make his "rather unconventional first-trip-to Europe itinerary," visiting Sweden and the Soviet Union in 1937 (Benson, The True 352; DeMott Steinbeck's Reading xxi, 77).

For Steinbeck, the communist approach was one of "many colored glasses," and, as he expressed to a writer friend in February 1936, he "dislike[d the communists] as people" (in A Life 120). The communists he had met reminded him of the "apostles" who, as he imagined, "had the same waspish qualities and . . . equally bad manners." However, despite all adversities, he

found that "some of the communist field workers [we]re strong, pure, inhumanly virtuous men." As he continued, "maybe that's another reason I personally dislike them and that does not rebound to my credit."

However, maybe that was not merely why he disliked them but why he, at that moment, decided to have communists as heroic literary expressions. Communism, as a peculiar phalanx movement of growing power in the world and in the Californian fields, became an effective means of exploring his "Argument." The communists came about as that which he had required: "symbols dignified and simple enough to make [the "Argument"] clean and lovely" (qtd. in Benson, The True 267). Thus, they constituted a fruitful medium for the experimentation of his "statement about the unit-man's keying device which bridges the gap between man's double nature; between the formidable strength of the phalanx and the free, teleologically creative individual." Astro stated:

> It thus remain[ed] to examine in greater detail the nature of this keying device which enable[d] man to recognize his phalanx role and to discover how, through participation as a unit in the group, he fulfil[ed] himself as an individual. (Astro, J.S. 65-66)

Although Astro was here referring to the investigation of the scientific and philosophical sources Steinbeck fed on, the question Astro posed was the very question the writer posed to himself as he went off to empirically study this matter through the communist experience of the CAWIU. And, as Steinbeck had initially proposed, he did not intend to write fiction but non-fiction, for, as he knew, his art--the novel form--depended on this decision: on the definition of man's double nature and of his "keying device" (Benson, The True 298). Steinbeck's interest lay in the comprehension of "why the individual [was] incapable of understanding the nature of the group" (J.S./C.S. 06/21/33, in Steinbeck, A Life 77).

Steinbeck, like other intellectuals of the time, was "preoccupied with what [he] . . . perceived as the discrepancy between man's dreams, man's desires, and the reality of an increasingly urban-industrial society" (Astro, "J.S." 64). As the "Argument" exposed, and his novels came to render, the discrepancy was so great that it "confound[ed] and compound[ed] all things--[it turned] the world upside-down," and man's "real nature" was confounded and compounded with his "anthropological nature" (Marx, EPM 141, 111). As Steinbeck asserted in The Log:

> Perhaps, . . . , [man's] species [his "real nature"] is not yet set, has not jelled, but

> is still in a state of becoming, bound by his physical memories to a past of struggle and survival, limited in his futures by the uneasiness of thought and consciousness [by his "anthropological nature"]. (96)

Thus, 1934 marked a significant change, which Lisca defined as Steinbeck's literary shift from "Escape [to] Commitment," and Benson defined as Steinbeck's shift from "romance towards a more realistic fiction based on experience" ("J.S.: Novelist" 110).

As Steinbeck went on to write IDB, his intentions were merely experiential. However, as he fed on a specific historical model of social conflict in the fields of his own state, in which two opposing groups of class interest clashed against one another and against mediating groups and individuals--including those in their own groups--and against the given situations, Steinbeck creatively transcended his own political/ideological interests and became a social critic of his own society. He was dealing with a totally different and innovative technical/valuative viewpoint. And, if not alone, the scientific perspective of the phalanx and the "non-teleological" literary narrative form forced the writer, if not to an immediate conscious recognition, at least to the exposition of his emerging alignments.

As he selected his historical thematic model of a specific communist organization--of its practice and ideas--in a particular social context of extreme violence, the elements of essential dominance of the farm owners appeared--power, property, and culture (Williams, "You're a Marxist" 74). If power and property directly confronted the migrant workers, what Steinbeck found was that one could not state the same in terms of culture. This culture, which was not merely reflected in the social behavioral strategies, norms, and practices but in the values and meanings as thought and felt by the socially defined groups, perhaps, brought about the deepest ironies, the deepest dubiosities. So deep was the cultural paradox, that one, as the counter-hegemonic communists, in many respects, thought, felt, and acted in accordance to and in (in)direct support to "the deeply based social order which they . . . even . . . [thought] they oppose[d] and indeed actually did oppose" (74).

For Steinbeck, "urbanism" and agrarianism certainly did oppose each other, for as C. Lewis exemplified, the urban communists failed to "understand[] the rural psyche" (128). But, as Steinbeck's novel came to expose, if they failed to understand the rural men and their world, it was because they had failed to understand their own selves and their relation to the world. Hence, if "urbanism" opposed agrarianism, they also met on common grounds.

The migrant workers and small farmers possessed a will of their own. And as IDB,

OMAM, and TGOW dramatically presented, their desires of freedom were essentially no different from those of their oppressors. Because Jim Nolan of IDB failed to acknowledge this fact, he failed to "key into the phalanx" and, thus, failed to give the most necessary organic, "natural" direction to the needy mass. In failing to transcend his cultural/ideological isolation and to comprehend man's deeply based alienation--their common dehumanization--he could only lead an "animal," an infuriated mad one which would merely fight for its most elementary need for food. He could only lead through mob action and through the tentative control and channelling of mob fury. But such a tentative was quite dangerous, for, as George of OMAM, who did "not know how to channel the vagaries of Lennie," Jim Nolan also stood "at the mercy of chance" (Marks 68).

Consequently, if Steinbeck used the scientific non-teleological viewpoint as a form of narrative construction, he also gave expression to it in the plot development, where those characters who failed to perceive things as they were stood in a position similar to that of the mouse of Robert Burns' poem of "Of Mice and Men:" they lost their security and their freedom. And, as in the novel's characters' case, they thus lost their humanity (Fontenrose 57; Lisca, THe Wide 139; Marks 59-60).

Although Steinbeck's "phalanx" theory was merely delineating itself, from the start Steinbeck had uncovered certain layers of his alignments. He had learned the process of hegemonic cultural incorporation as he perceived the discrepancy between his developing ideas of man's naturally given species-being and the hindering practices and values of the different individualistically based societies and organizations. He had learned "the saturating power of the structures of feeling of a given society" in which the ways through which people come to think and feel have deep connections to the social order/organization itself (Williams, "You're a Marxist" 74). And on this matter he decided to write, for, as he had already perceived and expressed in his "Argument," so deep was the cultural paradox that one, as the communists of IDB, in many respects, thought, felt, and acted in accordance to and in (in)direct support to "the deeply based social order which they . . . even . . . [thought] they oppose[d] and indeed actually [did] oppose" (74).

Hence, as he turns to the novelistic exploration of the "communist idea" and the "matter of the migrants," he learns the highly alienating process of political dominance of one specific group over another through instruments of power. He learns the structures and forms of political

dominance through direct and indirect coercion, and against these he takes an active stance.

From the culmination of experiences through interactive exchanges in the fields, Steinbeck learns that the hegemonic alienating structures of society are not merely maintained through cultural incorporation nor through their combination with political structures and articulations of coercion. As finally expressed in TGOW, Steinbeck gives expression to the newly acquired consciousness: class dominance and alienation are also, and always, maintained through economic structures based on the private appropriation of property, through the private appropriation of the objectification of one's labor.

Of course, the process was not as orderly as here expressed, for we are but extracting an overall view--a pattern--from a highly conflictive process, marked with profound doubts, reversals, frustrations, passionate outbursts, etc.. Nevertheless, one must not neglect that active, pressing moments of significant change occurred and that these are expressed in Steinbeck's surviving records. Williams affirmed:

> It is the reduction of the social to fixed forms that remains the basic error. Marx often said this, and some Marxists quote him, in fixed ways, before returning to fixed forms. The mistake as so often, is in taking terms of analysis as terms of substance. Thus we speak of world-view or of a prevailing ideology or of a class outlook, often without adequate evidence, but in this regular slide towards the past tense and a fixed form suppose, or even do not know that we have to suppose, that these exist and are lived specifically and definitively, in singular and developing forms. Perhaps the dead can be reduced to fixed forms, though their surviving records are against it. (Marxism 129)

Steinbeck's records are against it, and his novels, perhaps, even more. Steinbeck's novels were yet personal attempts of articulating responses to major questions on the nature of man and society. His novels thus constitute the very "fences" in terms of Steinbeck's literary career, as Casy so referred to in TGOW (224). They constitute "fences" precisely because the writer, like his own fictional heroes--Mac, George, and Jim Casy--decided to commit himself to the experience of man, to the (re)creation of these very experiences of historical social reality. He climbed the fences as they appeared, perceiving that there definitely were "different kinda fences" but that were always there.

If Steinbeck's "Argument of the Phalanx," quite like the Chicago sociologists' theory of human ecology, had a clear biological core and origin, it had as well--and differently from the Chicago sociologists--a clear human historical understanding. It was a highly complex fusion of ideas of the most varied kinds that, when transposed to his fiction, gained other ideas which

were not merely of the scientific, philosophical sort. Steinbeck also fed on a literary tradition, and, as Benson so mentioned, his "romantic" heritage of novel writing was also a significant element which he carried into his new commitment. According to Benson, this romantic heritage differed from that of the "novel proper," "veering toward "the mythic, allegorical forms,"" whereas the latter tended towards a more realistic exposition of "social relationships and activities" ("J.S.: Novelist" 106). And as Benson added, the romantic heritage also differed from the realistic tradition in its ties to the "old philosophy [which, in opposition to the new "scientific philosophies," held] the assumption that man can act, that he has a measure of free will, and that the choices he makes are made from genuine alternatives" (106).

Though attempting to bring his art to the state of "science," Steinbeck carried this "romantic" tradition with him and, despite his non-teleological aspirations, created highly teleological/"romantic", albeit (highly) conflictive and problematic heroes (Martin 81). But Steinbeck's "scientific" views were not quite those which negated human goal-oriented action. And the "science" Benson speaks of was more of a method than a series of hypothetical conclusions on the conditioning of human behavior. As Astro claimed, Ricketts' non-teleological/objective notions were translated by Steinbeck into a narrative stance (J.S. 119-140). "Is" thinking was to become a form of novel writing, which as Steinbeck himself later expressed to his literary agent, was but the attempt to write novels which expressed "the ways lives [we]re lived [and] not the way books [we]re written" (qtd. in Lisca, John Steinbeck 858). Indeed, as Swingewood stressed:

> Great writers do not set out simply to depict the social world in largely descriptive terms; it might be suggested that the writer by definition has a more critical task, of setting his characters in motion within artificially contrived situations to 'seek' their own private 'destiny', to discover values and meanings in the social world. (Swingewood and Laurenson 15)

However, as Swingewood later emphasized as well: "writers are part of the world they describe, frequently struggling with the question of values, and this potential activism must not be discounted in the analysis of their work" (88). Hence, in 1934, as Steinbeck decided to (re)create a historical experience which housed enormous potentials for the development of his thesis, one particular and important aspect of this new commitment was thus not merely Steinbeck's "self-neutralizing ambivalence," as expressed in a near absence of a narrating voice, but his intent of testing many of the hypothetical scientific notions he was discussing with his

biologist friend, Ed Ricketts (Astro, J.S. 128).

Steinbeck thus questioned goal/value-oriented action through the voicing and impact of it in a highly intense conflict of different "phalanx" expressions in the Californian fields and yet through a plot development which although "fictional," had deep connections with the very historical experiences--"the facts"--as narrated and observed to/by him. It was through the experience of a 24 year-old "Okie" boy who came to California seeking for a job and who, together with his uncle, Bill Hammett, became active in the communist led CAWIU that Steinbeck found his material. According to Daniel, London of IDB was a vivid recreation of Big Bill Hammett, who was an extremely talented leader of the vastly heterogeneous group of migrant workers of the California fields of the period (321, n. 45). And although many readers became upset with the "distortions" of the communist tactics as presented in the novel--for they did not correspond with the motivations and actions of the militants he supposedly modeled on--as C. Lewis carefully followed (and as various historical studies and documents rendered), these differences but reflected much of the internal divergences in the communist body itself and were thus but the application of one view of one side of the "dubious" communist battle (Benson and Loftis 208; Daniel 130-140, 152-155; Lewis, C. 132-134).

Historical "facts" abound within IDB. Dan, the "voice of history," was not merely a literary voice but literally as well: Dan narrates the historical journey of the IWW, descending from the Timber camps to take hold of the Californian fields. He speaks of its many conquests, of its rapid rise, and of its violent decline. He speaks of its tactics and of the fierce determination of its militants (Daniel 86; IDB 66, 73; Majka and Majka 57; McWilliams 155, 166-167). Sam, the longshoreman, tells the (his)story of the San Francisco waterfront strike and of its violent end in July 1934 as the National Guard violently suppressed all organization (IDB 182-183; Majka and Majka 86).

IDB borrowed various instances and tactics from different striking events and areas, rendering a composite which Benson and Loftis meticulously recaptured. And different from what Pressman believed, Steinbeck did not "distort[] the reality of the Depression by undercutting the historical effectiveness of the Left," for, in the period in which Steinbeck began to write, the bulk of the CAWIU's leadership was in jail. Mckiddy, his "Okie" source, was hiding due to this quite recent, massive turnover (Benson, The True 291). The historical communist model of IDB--the CAWIU--was liquidated in 1934. And, as the "Popular Front" policies of the Communist

International were established in 1935, communists disappeared from the Californian fields, attempting to reappear in 1936 through the newly established CIO affiliate: the UCAPAWA (Daniel 273; Kushner 82-83; Majka and Majka 83-93). The latter organization, however, never effectively entered into the fields. As they formally established a policy in a 1941 conference of giving preference to the more solid and more legally protected workers of the cannery and industrial sectors, they were merely ratifying a policy which had been adopted from the start. As the Associated Farmers entered the California fields, the communists moved out (Daniel 272-284; Majka and Majka 130-135; McWilliams 230-263)

Moreover, the absence of federal intervention, which Pressman complained of in IDB, is but in accordance to the acknowledgements of the historians that studied the conflicts between the government bodies and the Californian agro-industrial corporations of the period (Majka and Majka 102). If the State, in some instances, had truly conceded, it had also and greatly repressed, thus rendering its "pro-labor" actions as forms of "channel[ing] the political behavior of the protesters away from disruption" as insurgents were liquidated (57). If the growers, during many moments, feared and opposed federal reformist policies, in the long run, they benefitted from their contradictory effects and failures. Even the later New Deal government with its FSA programs rendered no better. The New Deal government neglected the rights of independent labor organization and the establishment of minimum labor conditions and wages to agricultural workers as were then granted to the industrial/urban workers of the country. Its reform-oriented FSA programs were minimal when compared to other programs in favor of the vast mechanized farming units. And while labor leaders were being tortured and killed in the fields, the government bodies were nowhere to be found (Daniel 258-285; Majka and Majka 79, 102-121).

It was in this gloomful atmosphere that Steinbeck forged his stories. And although stories they were, they kept close connections with history in their exposition of the social forces which drastically changed in such a small period of time. As Pressman, however, Melling also stated that Steinbeck "refuse[d] to engage [him]self practically with the politics of renewal. . . for political initiatives require much more than the ability to 'duck'"--as was suggested by Tom when he referred to the cause of Casy's death: "He didn' duck quick enough"" (111-112; TGOW 536). But Steinbeck's most immediate "engagement," as we have perceived, was to the historical social relations as they then occurred and to their exposition through his art.

As a consequence, Steinbeck's intellectual/artistic development led to the exposition of

the problem of rural "urbanization," as suggested by the school of Chicago members, as a process basically determined by the industrial, corporate phase of capitalism and by its particular mediation in the countryside. In viewing cultural history through this particular manner, Steinbeck, thus, became increasingly convinced that one had to resist not merely "urban" patriarchal, individualistic values and meanings but the mode of production that had given foundation to them in urban and rural areas alike. His journey was, therefore, one in which "knowledge legitimately le[d] to informed opinion as well as fact, to understanding of consequences as well as causes, to commitment to act as to consider" (Berreman 395).

Steinbeck became increasingly aware of the social processes that were occurring in his native state and of their relations to those within his country and in the world. As Marx, Steinbeck became increasingly aware of the necessity to change them as well. He also became aware that,

> the vision of the future . . . [was] not to be purely economic. . . . [That] it [was], as well, supremely social and cultural, involving the task of trying to imagine how a society without hierarchy, a society of free people, a society that has at once repudiated the economic mechanisms of the market, [could] possibly cohere. [He came to the awareness--as Marx and Engels before him--that] historically, all forms of hierarchy have always been based ultimately on gender hierarchy and on the building block of the family unit. (Jameson 355)

As Jameson affirmed, it is through this perspective that Marxism and feminism meet. And, as we have seen, it was precisely through the matriarchal perspective of Briffault, applied to the novels, that Steinbeck found "not an antagonistic juncture, but the moment at which the feminist project and the Marxist and socialist project me[t] and face[d] the same dilemma: how to imagine Utopia" (Jameson 355).

Truly, Steinbeck faced the dilemma; nevertheless, only after he had committed one gross historical "distortion," which quite ironically worked in favor of his art. In 1934 Steinbeck anticipated an event which was merely beginning to occur. Through the (re)creation of an experience which was yet to massively occur within his state, he rendered much of what the 30s came to represent to the nation: the closing of the frontiers and the confrontation with the myth of the exceptionalist modernist American agrarian quest, "the challenge . . . to find the gain in the loss, "the recompense"" (Wyatt, The Fall 207).

According to Benson:

> It seems likely that through his conversations with McKiddy Steinbeck was made aware for the first time of the extent of the great Dust Bowl migration and of the

> depth of hostility in the reception given the Okies in the Golden State. McKiddy's family was apparently radicalized by these conditions . . . ("The Background to TGOW" 52)

As Steinbeck began to write IDB, the Dust Bowl refugees were just beginning to undercut the job offers and thus to replace the more radicalized Mexicans, Filipinos, and Japanese workers with whom the CAWIU had so courageously worked during four continuous years of extremely "dubious battles" (Daniel 105-104; Kushner 55-79; Majka and Majka 74-83). It thus seems likely that Steinbeck gave McKiddy's specific experience a far larger dimension as not one single nonwhite, non-American worker is to be found in IDB. Yes, Steinbeck truly did "distort" history. However, neither did he distort "the image of the Left's effectiveness," nor did he do it for the sake of a "biological mysticism" (Pressman, "Individualists" 129). Steinbeck distorted history for the sake of his art and of his cultural ethnocentric view.

Steinbeck, perhaps, saw in McKiddy and in those Dust Bowl refugees the very heroic quality he thought art needed to express. As he later remarked in his three journalistic recordings, different from past "habitual migrants," the "removal migrants" promised more:

> One has only to go into the squatters' camps . . . to look at the strong purposeful faces, often filled with pain and more often, when they see the corporation-held idle lands, filled with anger, to know that this new race is here to stay and that heed must be taken of it. ("Their Blood is Strong" 56)

For Steinbeck, the Dust Bowl migrants were different, for "their blood [was] strong." As he listed the reasons for the historical impact of the Dust Bowl refugees in "Dubious Battle in California," among others, he stated: they were Americans, they "had come not due to a matter of choice," "they would inevitably seek for . . . land," "they [we]re not easily intimidated[, for] they [we]re courageous, intelligent, and resourceful," and, consequently, "they [could] not be herded, attacked, starved, or frightened as all others were" (68; emphasis added).

What Steinbeck thought brought hope, the agro-industrialists feared. And as one Chamber of Commerce representative exposed the thoughts and feelings of the Associated Farmers, in many paradoxical respects, these came in (in)direct support to Steinbeck's opposing hopes:

> Can we expect these new white transient citizens to fill their place [the former Mexican laborers]? The white transients are not tractable labor. Being so-called American citizens, they are going to be the finest pabulum for unionization for either group--the AFL or the subversive elements. They are not going to be satisfied with 160 working days. (qtd. in Majka and Majka 107)

Although both views had a common standing, they, however, ultimately opposed each other: as

one feared, the other welcomed the migrants' arrival.

Steinbeck saw and increasingly came to see in the Dust Bowl migrants men with whom he shared common cultural values and practices. His deep understandings, thus, allowed him to perceive the very ways in which an effective liberating phalanx could possibly come about. He thus perceived the ways through which the "keying in" device could occur. Therefore, as he increasingly came to share experiences with these reminiscent "yeoman" farmers, he discovered the imposing limits--"the fences"--these men, women, and children would all have to climb as they desperately "beat[] their wings like . . . birds . . . on a dusty winda" of a highly industrialized "urban"/rural landscape--a landscape which men, like their own selves, had constructed (TGOW 321). With the shared experiences, Steinbeck found not only the 'fences' they would have to climb but "the fences" he himself would have to face as well.

Steinbeck, like the agribusinessmen of his state, focused on a historical experience of extreme social conflict with rather ethnocentric, exceptionalist values in mind. Notwithstanding, the Dust Bowl refugees, for Steinbeck, were not "so-called Americans," but perhaps even more 'American' than those they confronted. And although they were great people indeed, they were people nonetheless, "subject to the weaknesses of humans and to the greatnesses of humans" (J.S./M.M. 04/?/35, in Steinbeck, A Life 108).

As Steinbeck expressed in both his journalistic articles and in TGOW, the "three cries of history"--the three cries of modernism--were indissolubly bound to the history of these people, they were part of the cultural inventory of the hegemonic American mind, of the mind, as Mullen proved, of "all levels of expressive culture in America--folk, popular, and elite" (752). However, as Steinbeck came to discover and express, although these values were shared in thought, they were not at all shared in terms of their practices. Liberty, fraternity, and equality were not available to all; as a matter of fact, as Steinbeck came to perceive, they were not available to any.

These were but ideals, ideals which had still to be fulfilled. As Peeler had remarked, Steinbeck was part of the tradition of "Depression artists and writers," which sought to assure that this distinctive American culture "remained permanent and untroubled beneath a Depression-plagued American civilization" (07). For as Steinbeck saw the 'hungry, murderous' men massively coming into the country, he envisioned the possibility of the continuity of the American cultural quest. The "true" frontiers were not closed. Furthermore, as Peeler also asserted, like that of the artists and intellectuals of his time, Steinbeck transcended these boundaries in search of "more

of a universal entity rather than a peculiarly American one," for as his phalanx theory posed, man had a definable core of meaning, of definition, given by his very biological/ecological nature, which was truly universal (07).

We thus return to where we started off. Yes, Steinbeck did share in the very preoccupations which Peeler defined as those of the Depression intellectuals. Yes, he shared the preoccupations of the Chicago sociologists. But to share the same preoccupations does not mean to share the same understandings. Quite ironically, both the writer and the Chicago urban sociologists found the basis for their developing notions of the "universal entity" of man in the areas of biology and ecology. Both based their developing hypotheses on the highly problematic relations between the individual and society within a concept of human nature which had a definite biological/animal core. But Steinbeck's "scientific" basis was not one which found competition and struggle as the defining "subsocial-symbiotic" foundation within all and against all animal groupings. Steinbeck's ecological view was historical, and it had its root

> in the notion that man is wholly embedded in the tissue of all natural processes. All interconnections between living organisms are delicate, extremely complex, and cannot be broken without damage to the whole. (Astro, "From the Tidepool" 07)

And the writer was not ashamed to speculate:

> one could easily say that man, during his hunting period, had to give up the group since all game hunters must, and now that his food is not to be taken by stealth and precision, is going back to the group which takes its food by concerted action." (J.S./C.S. 06/21/33, in Steinbeck, A Life 76; emphasis added)

According to Steinbeck, all animals interacted with nature, they all labored with nature; however, man labored differently. If the animals, as the symbolic turtle of TGOW exemplified, interacted with the whole of nature, producing change by their mere presence and instinctive laboring, "Manself" produced freely, "emerg[ing] ahead of his accomplishments" and thus constantly creating new needs and new definitions of need through his very labor (192). Hence, man's differentiating factor was labor itself, conscious interactive labor which changed both his world and his own definition. This was man's distinctive factor, his "burden and his glory."

Thus, as Steinbeck too labored with his material, he looked into both aspects of "the tragic miracle of consciousness" (The Log 96). And although his ethnocentric view (which we must admit was there) contributed to the hope that the fierceness of these frontiersmen could contribute to the formation of the "phalanx," his commitment to his material--to the rendering of life as it was lived--imposed on the writer the necessary expression of the counter-opposing

aspect of the fierce individualism of these men, of their "burden."

In 1968, as anthropologists were increasingly questioning the empiricist, positivistic--"value-free"--approaches (such as of the urban sociologists of the school of Chicago) which had given foundation to the major social scientific theories, Berreman avowed, "We are finding, I think, that passion is not incompatible with reason; that, in fact, reason goes hand-in-hand with passion, and both with courage" (Berreman 396). As he earlier stated,

> If they [the "nostalgic practitioners"] were to succeed, [Anthropology] might in fact be dead. But since their science is man, and since what they want to avoid involvement in is the affairs of men, their desire is hopeless of achievement. They are involved whether they wish it or not. The question is not "Shall I get involved?" but "How can I be involved responsibly--in a way consistent with humanity as I understand it?" (395)

Indeed, Berreman had begun his article restating Wolf's claim on the object and objective of Anthropology, "namely: "the creation of an image of man that will be adequate to the experience of our time" (qtd. in Berreman 391).

Steinbeck, although an artist, posed both the anthropological objective and question to himself as he set off to study and to serve the phalanx, to serve humanity as he understood it. And Steinbeck, as his very own creation--Mac--perceived the need for passion, the need for the "subjective" view. Quite ironically, his ethnocentric, exceptionalist passionate view was not incompatible with his reasoning. The image of the American rural worker, of man itself, that Steinbeck presented in his three migrant novels, historically proved more durable than that presented by the urban sociologists.

Quite like his own heroic creations, Steinbeck combined an "outside"/"objective" view with an "inside"/"subjective" view of the experience of these men (Gjessing 400). He thus perceived the very limits of both the outer and inner realms of the hegemonic cultural expressions of the U.S. as the "frontiersmen" of the Central Plains confronted the very last geographical and temporal frontier of the West.

Thus, as Pressman claimed, truly, the opposing tendencies of socialist and liberal values lay in TGOW itself. In fact, as we have seen, they lay in all three migrant novels. But if Pressman was right in his assertion, he was wrong in his reasoning. The contradictions lay in the novel, not because they reflected Steinbeck's own ideological conflicts but because they reflected the ideological conflicts of the historical social reality Steinbeck metamorphosed.

Railton, as many critics before him, affirmed that TGOW had a "tension between the

novel's rhetorical and its narrative tasks," for, as he perceived, in the inter-chapters, Steinbeck "tr[ied] to suggest that [the] coming of the American Revolution was inevitable, organically decreed," whereas the plot development of the characters suggested otherwise. And as Railton emphasized, "critics have accused him of being wrong, because the change he apparently predicted never took place" (29, 28).

But, as Conder emphasized,

> Steinbeck . . . d[id] not unravel the Hobbesian dilemma; . . . he d[id] not reduce consciousness to temperament or instinct; . . . he instead ma[de] consciousness in the service of man's instinct the center of man's freedom. . . . He assume[d] that if nature's spirit ha[d] purpose, man as part of it c[ould] give it expression and direction realizing his own purpose. (140)

For Steinbeck, the American Revolution was a potential inevitability, ultimately determined by the conflicts between man's social being--his "anthropological nature"--and his species being--his "real nature." Nevertheless, he knew that "anything as deep as a structure of feeling [could] only [be] changed by active new experience" (Williams, "You're a Marxist" 76). He thus knew that the necessary changes would demand time and struggle. As the plot development of TGOW expressed, if many of the socialist values and meanings had roots in the American hegemonic tradition, many did not.

As the government camp experience of TGOW, demonstrated, the American migrants constantly resisted organization. They constantly resisted sharing at the level of production of "the works of their hands and heads" (Steinbeck, Working 152). They thus constantly resisted one of the most fundamental and differentiating values of socialism (Williams, "Walking Backwards" 283-284; Anderson, P. 330). However, if the conflicts brought difficulties, they did not bring total despair. As Casy himself avowed, "the on'y thing you got to look at is that ever' time they's a little step fo'ward, she may slip back a little, but never slips clear back" (TGOW 493).

Steinbeck thought the American migrants were there to stay. He did not foresee that which his nameless migrant character somewhat prophetically voiced: "Don't they make explosives out of cotton?" (42). Steinbeck did not foresee the possibilities the war was yet to bring about. The Dust Bowl refugees--the historical models of his very characters--ultimately did regain social stability for the production for the war, however, not from the production of cotton but of explosives themselves. When the U.S. entered the World War II, California received more war industries than any other state. The migrants were massively taken into the urban fold. With

the dispensation of the Dust Bowl refugees from its fields, California, for the first time in its history, suffered a shortage of labor which only ceased with the massive entrance of Mexicans (Majka and Majka 121-132; Stein 201-274).

"The change [Steinbeck] apparently predicted never took place." But to state that Steinbeck was wrong in his commitment to his material is perhaps a bit hasty. As later historical studies pointed out:

> Culturally and ideologically, the white migrants were at this time less organizable than most previous groups. . . . The racism and nativism [the "anti-communist patriotism" as defined by Stein] of many of the white migrants also made them less conducive to organization. Many resented UCAPAWA's nondiscriminatory policy. [However] if their position as the dominant agricultural labor force had continued, it is conceivable that the white migrants would have joined a union or constructed their own. In fact, a large portion of the participants in the 1947 DiGiorgio strike, perhaps the most significant strike in the period between 1939 and 1965, were remnants of the Dust Bowl migration. (Majka and Majka 132)

If it is true that man enters into definite predetermined relations, he also acts upon them with his own determinations. He thus changes these relations as well as his own self. Like Marx, Steinbeck presented the dynamics of the world through a dialectical, historical, and materialist manner. Similarly to the characters he developed, Steinbeck struggled with the question of his own "urban" values, and, as Gold stated in 1941, if Steinbeck began his journey fighting against the Marxists he then came to know (Gold himself being one), "in the fight he learned a lot. . . . [And] it was through a changed vision that he was able to see the Okie problem when it arose" (28).

However, Steinbeck did not fight merely against the communists, nor against those he saw as the fascists of the Californian fields. He also fought against his own self and his own defining values. Steinbeck in fact began, if not to see, at least to express "the Okie problem" even before he embraced the "Okie" theme and a socialist vision. To follow Steinbeck's path is but to follow the complex, dynamic, and active path of cultural change of an individual who changed dramatically as he engaged in active new experiences. To follow his path and those of his own (re)creations is to follow the path of change without a cause/effect relation. Residual--even reactionary--ideas may subsist alongside new emergent ones. Agrarian practices and values may subsist alongside new "urban" ones. Man carries his past inheritance into the new experiences. His views, his values are part of his very orientations, and although his inventory may suffer changes, it is through the engagement in active new experiences that these may

come about.

"The Americans still tend to move westward and many drift southward toward the sun." In 1932, Edmund Wilson, referring to the hegemonic American quest, verified that the search for "Eden" led not merely to San Diego but to San Diego as "a veritable jumping-off place." And as he added, "since the depression the [suicide] rate seems to have increased" (qtd. in Melling 129). The cities, the most dynamic centers of modernized societies, had always been looked upon as locals where the modernist expressions--contradictions--were most evident. But in the 1930s, the ongoing process of urbanization and industrialization suffered if not a reversal, certainly a massive and accelerated expansion towards the fields throughout the whole nation. The "hard side" of the American "agrarian"/"urban" identity triumphed over the "soft side." History conquered the myth. To this matter, Melling thus added:

> The closed frontier bec[a]me an eschatological matter; man [wa]s both consumed and consummated by fire. Pursuit of the sun initiate[d] a journey toward light which [wa]s an act of illumination, a fulfillment of self, through self-destruction. (129)

Nevertheless, as Steinbeck's journey as well as that of his characters come to express, man is consumed and consummated by fire, by the

> fire <u>of labour</u>, appropriated as part and parcel of labour's organism, and, as it were, made alive for the performance of their functions in the process, they are in truth consumed, but consumed with a purpose, as elementary constituents of new use-values, of new products, ever ready <u>as means of subsistence</u> for individual consumption, or <u>as a means of production</u> for some new labour-process. (Marx, <u>The Capital</u> 204)

Steinbeck's novels and the school of Chicago's essays are but pole and counter-pole of the active laborings that were brought about with the culmination of the processes which led to the Great Depression and to the consolidation of the corporate capitalist state. One tells us that we are but consumed. The other tells us that we are still possibly to be consummated through the very possibilities brought about with the consumingness.

Steinbeck himself had found that art, at times surpassed the different sciences, for one "could find any scientific discovery in the poetry of the preceding generation. . . . The artist is simply the spokesman of the phalanx" (J.S./G.A. ?/?/33, in Steinbeck, <u>A Life</u> 80). But, as we have seen, the social scientist is also a spokesman of the phalanx, whether he wants to be or not. And as Gjessing concluded his essay on "the social responsibility of the social scientist," he thus stated:

> Ethically, the social sciences should serve humanity--no more, no less; but in a world filled with conflict between classes, ethnic groups, nations, etc., it would seem impossible to serve the interests of all simultaneously. If one must choose between the immediate interests of the oppressed and those of the oppressor, there can be no doubt that our responsibility is first and foremost to the former; for it is here that our special competence lies. . . . Our conscious commitment to the benefit of humanity as a whole--with the increased sensitivity to unconscious sociocultural bias that this commitment may produce--can only contribute to the advancement of science. (402)

Steinbeck's commitment to the comprehension and to the representation of the real problems of the men, defined by (inter)active (objective and subjective) exchanges between himself and his material, led him towards the creation of an image of man more adequate for his time, in fact, far more adequate than the image produced by the Chicago social scientists. Quite ironically, Robert Redfield--one of the most eminent of the Chicago members--in 1957, avowed that social scientists had to be "unashamed to wish mankind well" (qtd. in Berreman 395). And certainly the Chicago sociological members were so. The problem, however, lay in their perspective--their value--of mankind which relied on the comprehension of social organization as one naturally and necessarily divided into classes.

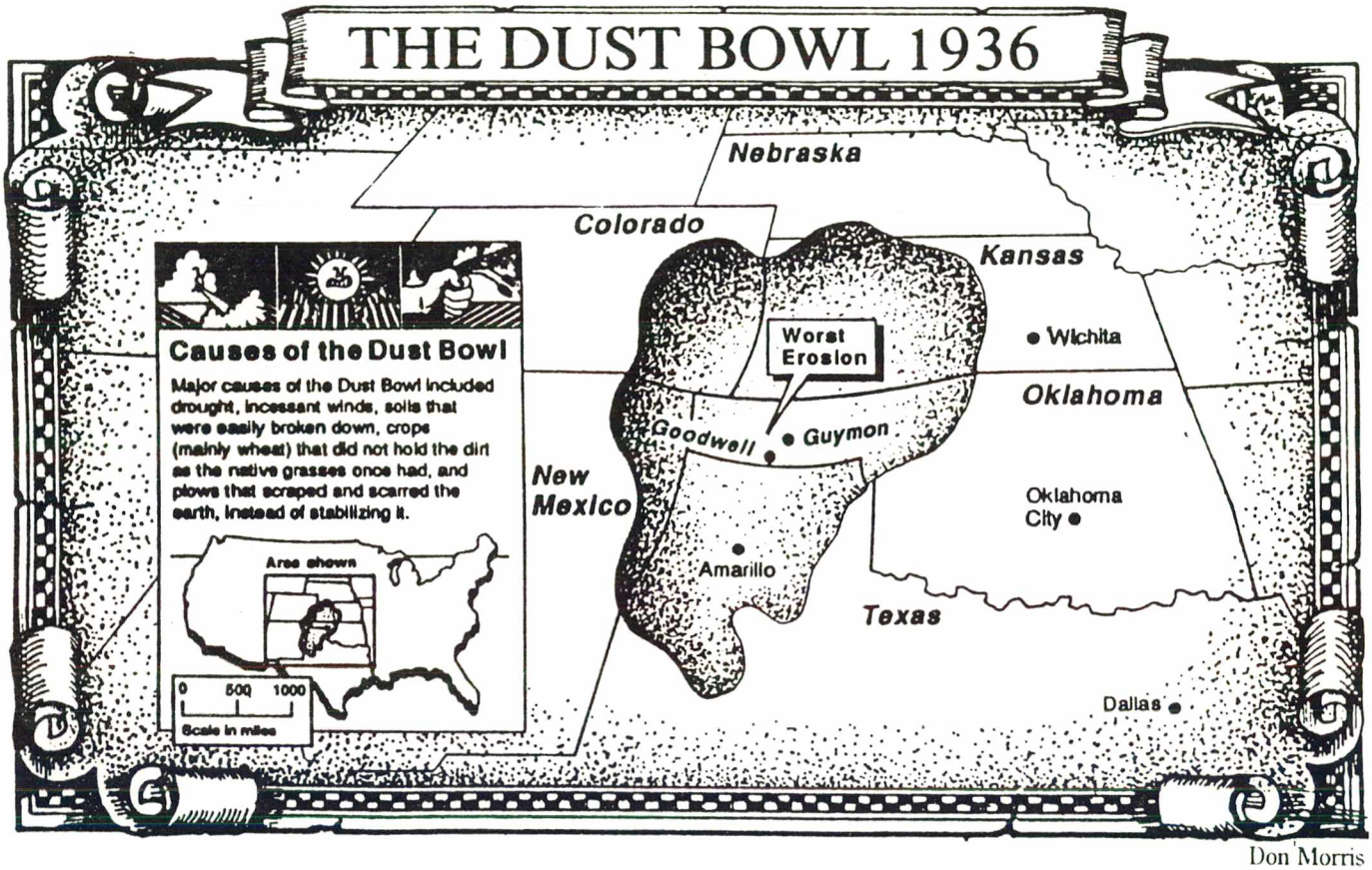
Steinbeck, on the other hand, relied on scientific, philosophical, and empirical sources to find and to creatively assert otherwise. Benson claimed:

> Perhaps no such thing as a novelist who is also a scientist is possible--a writer who consistently brings a thoroughgoing scientific philosophy and methodology to the writing of fiction. But Steinbeck went further in this direction than any other modern American writer of distinction has, and as far, perhaps, as any writer can. (Benson, "J.S.: Novelist" 123)

As Steinbeck has shown us, perhaps such a thing is possible. But, perhaps, we may have to await future history to effectively assert so, for, as Marx asserted, "mankind . . . inevitably sets itself only such tasks as it is able to solve . . ." (Marx, A Contribution 21).

Both opposing views were but active expressions of a highly detrimental period of international crisis. Both Steinbeck's "scientific" representations and the school of Chicago's "anti-scientific" direction had to await another international capitalist crisis to be revised. Future history, perhaps, may come to finally bear that which until today remains unsolved, but which James Agee alluded to when the scientific physical exploration exploded in Hiroshima:

> . . . man's fate has forever been shaped between the hands of reason and spirit, now in collaboration, again in conflict. Now reason and spirit meet on final ground. If either or anything is to survive, they must find a way to create an indissoluble partnership. (qtd. in Berreman 396).



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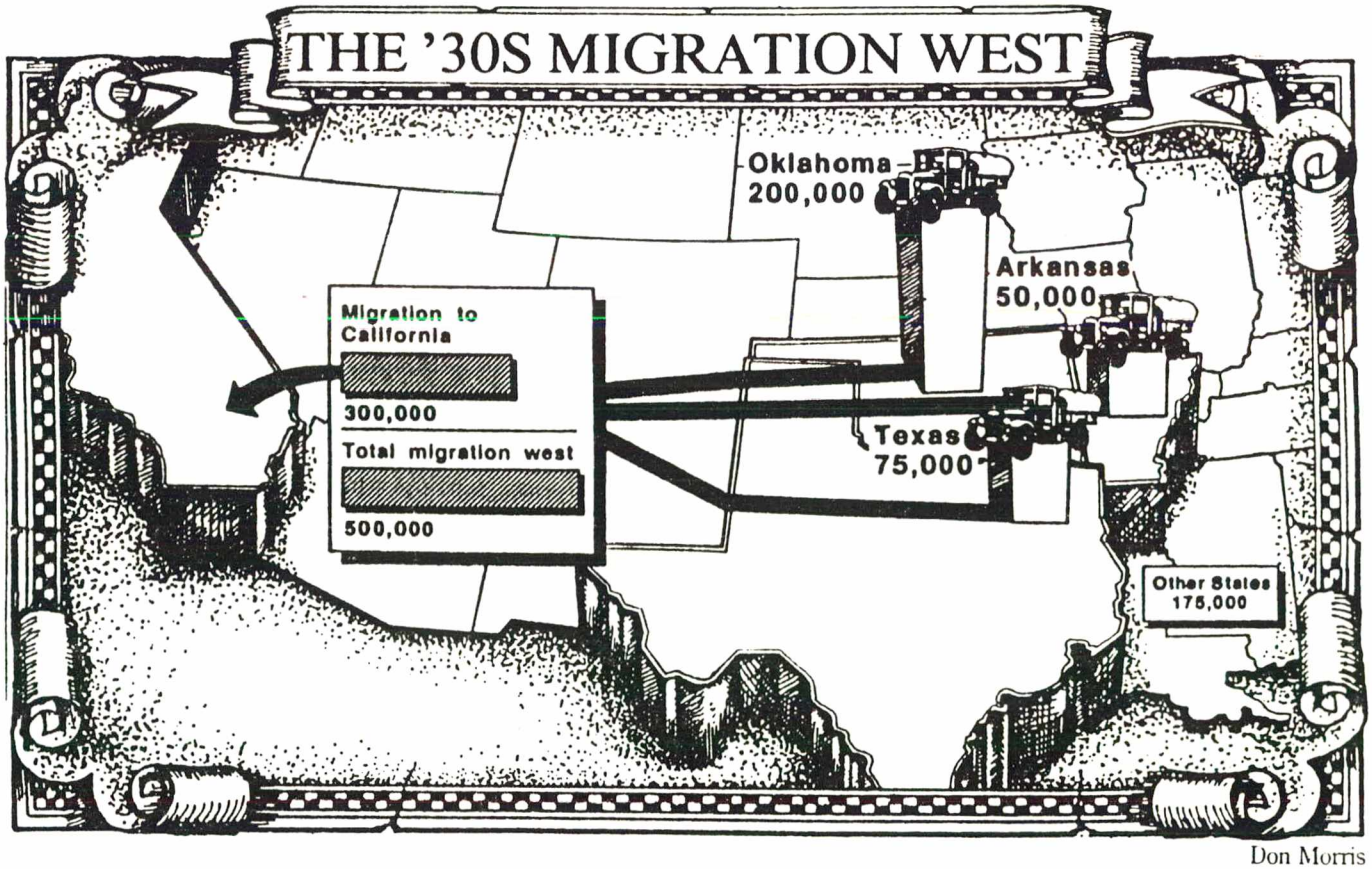

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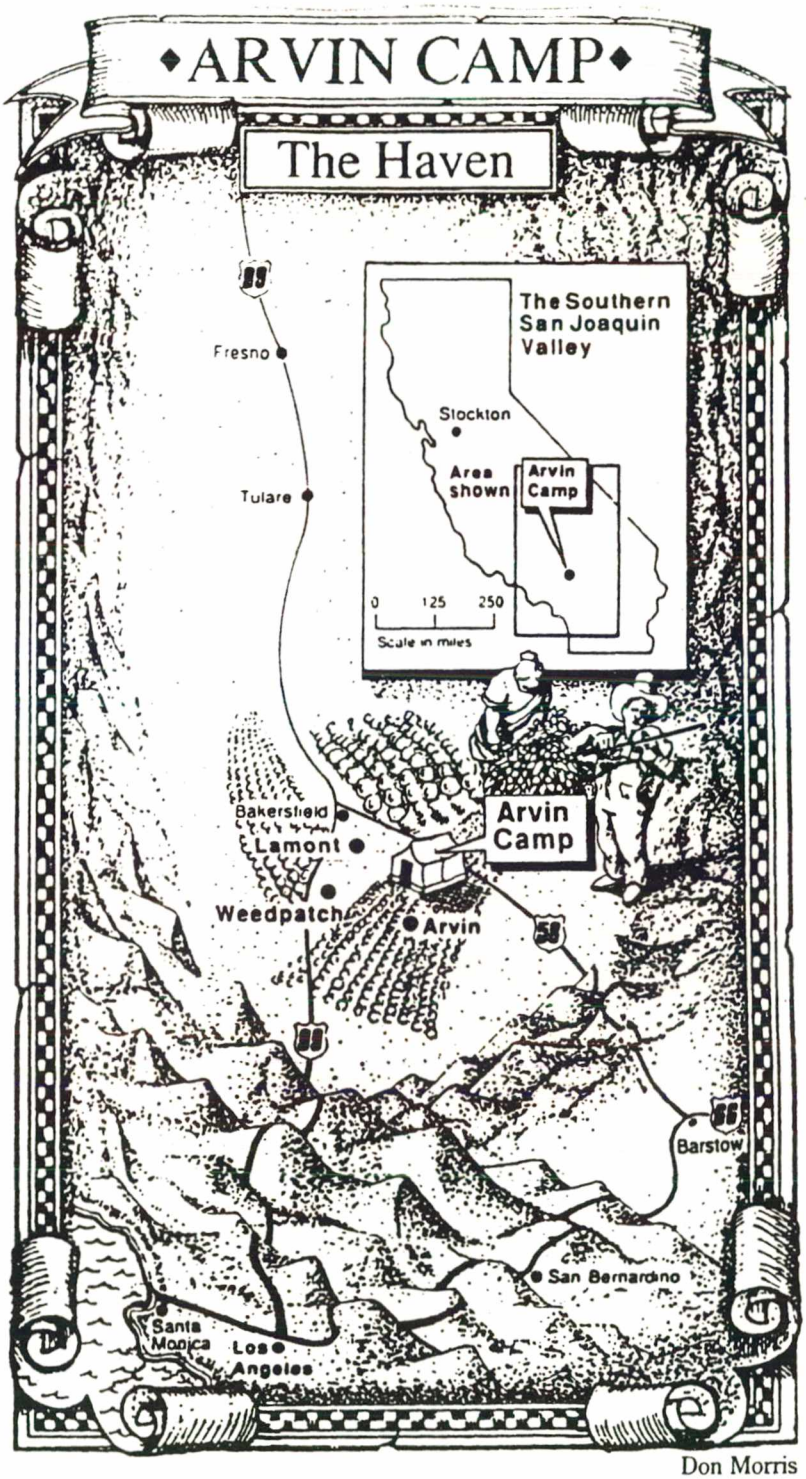

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